THE INTERPRETER'S AUDIENCE

A STUDY OF RHETORIC AND HERMENEUTICS

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INTRODUCTION

Rhetoric, commonly understood as "the art of speaking," appears intimately related to modern hermeneutics, which since Schleiermacher has been defined as "the art of understanding." Speaking understandably and understanding speech belong together as do speakers and listeners. When the speaker and the listener are engaged in the process of discourse, each performs both "arts" simultaneously.

> As he composes his thoughts in words, a speaker or writer hears the words echoing within himself and thereby follows his own thought, as though he were another person. Conversely, a hearer or reader repeats within himself the words he hears and thereby understands them, as though he were himself two individuals. . . . The speaker listens and the hearer speaks.[1]

For communication to occur, the speaker must listen not only to himself or herself, but also to the listeners. In other words, the listener or listeners participate in the construction and development of speech, that is if the speech results in true communication, which does not always happen.

For anyone serious about the process of interpretation, it seems pertinent to consider both the process of understanding speech (hermeneutics) and the process of speaking understandably (rhetoric). In both disciplines, it is the sameness

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[1]Walter Ong, "Voice as Summons for Belief," in Literature and Belief. English Institute Essays, 1957 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958), p. 83.

and differences between speaking and listening that facilitates whatever is said to be understandable, and that creates new understandings.

Unfortunately, in some communities, including academic communities, the word "rhetoric" is used mostly as a censorious term. Naming an opponent's argument "rhetorical" improves one's own stance toward the listeners and the subject matter. However, the continuance of such a rhetorical use of "rhetoric" prevents us from appreciating a tradition of thought and practice which was at the center of Western culture until the modern period, and from engaging in a productive dialogue with those who have brought about the new study of rhetoric in the twentieth century. Of course speaking is rhetorical, but what does that mean? It means that the speaker includes the listener(s) in the process of deciding what to say and how to say it. It means that the audience is one of the constituents of discourse. Almost all discourse includes an audience in some way, even if the audience is only the speaker's self.

The real choice today is not between rhetorical or non-rhetorical speech, but between effective and ineffective speech, between speech that makes a difference and speech that makes no difference at all. One does not have to study rhetoric to make such a choice. Students of rhetoric (and also hermeneutics), who find it helpful to reflect upon communication, will always suffer from the "natural" genius who with no forethought expresses the very true word. The study

of rhetoric is probably of little use for saints or geniuses. It is for the rest of us, persons who may wake up without inspiration, but who try to understand what is happening, and try to find the right words so that a better course of action may be taken rather than an inferior one. It is for ordinary persons who desire to "rise to the occasion" and who know that if they do not "rise" they will not have met the demands of the day.

Although the disciplines of rhetoric and hermeneutics appear intimately related, their far-reaching accomplishments in the twentieth century have remained for the most part isolated from one another. Only in the past decade do we see the beginnings of a new dialogue between the two disciplines, as for example in the exchange between Gadamer and Dockhorn.[2] My hope is that this study will be a contribution to these beginnings.

Historically, hermeneutics is an off-spring of rhetoric, and many of its basic principles have been borrowed from rhetorical theory. This is true not only of the hellenistic period, when biblical hermeneutics first developed as a discipline, but also for the Reformation and even modern hermeneutics. As Gadamer has written:

> Where, indeed, but to rhetoric should the theoretical examination of interpretation turn? Rhetoric from oldest tradition has been the only advocate of a

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[2] See Klaus Dockhorn, "Hans-Georg Gadamer, Wahrheit und Methode," a review, in Goettingische Gelehrte Anzeigen 218, No. 3-4 (1966), pp. 169-206; and Gadamer's response in "Rhetorik, Hermeneutik, und Ideologiekritik," in Kleine Schriften (Tuebingen, 1967), pp. 113-30.

> claim to truth that defends the probable, the eikos (Verisimile), and that which is convincing to the ordinary reason, against the claim of science to accept as true only what can be demonstrated and tested! Convincing and persuading, without being able to prove --these are obviously as much the aim and measure of understanding and interpretation as they are the aim and measure of the art of oration and persuasion.[3]

Having borrowed from rhetoric, modern hermeneutics moved away from rules of interpretation and examined the phenomenon of understanding itself upon which the rules were based. In the process, it has developed a theological and philosophical perspective of interpretation.

One aspect of rhetoric which hermeneutics did not borrow from the rhetorical tradition, and which has become a major concern in modern rhetorical studies, is the function of the audience or listeners in the construction of persuasive speech.[4]

Our present situation can therefore be described as having a hermeneutics engaged in a thorough examination of how speech creates understanding, but for the most part it has excluded the listeners or audience from its explorations. At the same time we have a rhetoric, which has begun a modern analysis of the audience as well as revived traditional studies, but for the most part, has not yet developed a philosophical framework that takes into account the modern issue of historical consciousness or the structure of understanding, which have been central concerns in hermeneutics. So in terms

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[3]Hans-Georg Gadamer, Philosophical Hermeneutics, trans. David Linge (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), p. 24.

[4]See Thomas Sloane "Rhetoric," in The New Encyclopedia Britannica 15 (1975), pp. 798-803.

of comprehending the total act of interpretation, it would seem that the strength of modern rhetoric, its inclusion of the audience in the creation and delivery of discourse, and the strength of modern hermeneutics, its fundamental description of the human context for understanding, are both necessary. Because the audience of the interpreter has been most neglected in hermeneutics, it will serve as the focus of our dialogue between these two disciplines.

In order to understand the function of the audience in either rhetorical or hermeneutical theory, it is necessary to place it within the larger perspective of these disciplines. For rhetoric, this entails the description of the rhetorical perspective which is audience-oriented, and the methods used in speaking persuasively from such a perspective. For modern hermeneutics, since little is directly said about audiences, we will look at the descriptions of what audiences do, namely understand. So the first part of our discussion will describe the audience in rhetorical theory, excluding those rhetorical theories which are not audience-centered. The second part will be a review of the various perspectives of understanding in modern hermeneutics.

In the third part, we shall proceed to an analysis of the interpretive situation on the basis of the benefits gained from the combined disciplines of rhetoric and hermeneutics. My own suspicion is that much more is to be accomplished in a dialogue between contemporary rhetoricians and hermeneuts than the third part will be able to do, but we do hope that

the discussion will provide suggestions and even be a persuasive argument for further work in this area.

PART I

THE AUDIENCE IN RHETORIC

The rhetorical understanding of the audience lies embedded in a total rhetorical perspective of discourse, and in order to understand the first, it is important to have some understanding of the second. In the first chapter, the rhetorical perspective of discourse will be described as it was hammered out in the Classical period. The various positions taken by the sophists, Plato, Aristotle, and Cicero continue to provide a provocative portrait of the peculiar character of rhetorical discourse and its differences from philosophical and poetical discourse.

Besides its perspective of discourse, rhetoric also offers its own description of how the elements of discourse interrelate. In the second chapter, the "rhetorical situation" will be explored in order to observe the interrelationships between the audience, the speaker, and the subject matter.

Finally, in the third chapter, the rhetorical method of invention, that is, the method of discovering what can be said in particular situations, will be reviewed. This will allow a view of how the audience functions as a co-constituent of discourse in the development of persuasive speech.

This discussion of rhetoric involves only a small portion of the rhetorical tradition and focuses mostly upon the

rhetoric of argumentation rather than stylistics. However, our hope is that the following should open enough doors for our purposes.

CHAPTER I

THE RHETORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The rhetorical perspective and the human spirit that animates that perspective arose out of the Greek and Roman experiences of the political power of speech.[1] Although these experiences failed to survive the onslaughts of violence and tyranny, for a time the Greek polis and the early Roman republic did provide space for the flourishing of human speech in the public arena. The sophists and the Roman rhetoricians formulated, preserved, and transmitted these experiences to others, as well as attempted to protect this perspective of human speech from the opposing trends of Platonic philosophy and deceitful propaganda. In the Greek period, the battle between the Sophists and Plato was to have momentous consequences not only for Greek life, but also for the later appropriation of the "Classics" in Western culture.

> The disagreement between Plato and the sophists over rhetoric was not simply an historical contingency, but reflects a fundamental cleavage between two irreconcilable ways of viewing the world. There have always been those, especially among philosophers and religious thinkers, who have emphasized goals and absolute standards and have talked much about truth, while there have been as many others to whom these concepts seem shadowy or imaginary and who find the only certain reality in the process of life and the present moment. In general, rhetoricians and orators,

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[1]Hannah Arendt, The Human Condition (New York: Doubleday Anchor Book, 1959), p. 25.

> with certain distinguished exceptions, have held the latter view, which is the logical, if unconscious, basis of their common view of art as a response to a rhetorical challenge unconstrained by external principles. The difference is not only that between Plato and Gorgias, but between Demosthenes and Isocrates, Virgil and Ovid, Dante and Petrarch, and perhaps, Milton and Shakespeare.[2]

The battle between Plato and the sophists over the claims of the eternal and the relative, or absolute and probable knowledge, parallels in some ways the nineteenth century clash between the Naturwissenschaften (nature sciences) and the Geisteswissenschaften (human sciences). In both situations, the question was whether or not "truth" that could not be either logically demonstrated or empirically tested could be anything more than "flattery," to use Plato's phrase.[3] In this respect at least, rhetoric and hermeneutics form a common front against scientism, and even more importantly, a front for the legitimate claims of "truths" that are relative to human existence.

In order to explore the rhetorical perspective, we will begin with Plato's argument against the sophists, and then see how his former pupil, Aristotle, restored rhetoric in the shadow of Plato's critique but also with an eye on the demands of political life. Finally, we will turn to the Roman rhetorician, Cicero, who in many ways re-captured the sophistic rhetorical spirit, which may show why rhetoric played the

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[2]George Kennedy, The Art of Persuasion in Greece (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 15.

[3]Plato Gorgias, in Plato, vol 5, trans. W. R. M. Lamb (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1925), 463a.

central role it did in the experiences of our Classical heritage.

Among Plato's dialogues, the Gorgias and the Phaedrus most directly address the problem of rhetoric. Socrates' attack upon sophistic rhetorical practices, in the Gorgias, proceeds by setting up the opposition between learning and believing. Plato then moves the dialogue as follows:

> Soc. Now which kind of persuasion is it that rhetoric creates in law courts or any public meetings on matters of right and wrong: the kind from which we get belief without knowledge or that from which we get knowledge?
>
> Gorg. Obviously, I presume, Socrates, that from which we get belief.
>
> Soc. Thus rhetoric, it seems, is a producer of persuasion for belief, not for instruction of right and wrong.
>
> Gorg. Yes.
>
> Soc. And so the rhetorician's business is not to instruct a law court or a public meeting in matters of right and wrong, but only to make them believe; since, I take it, he would not in a short while instruct such a mass of people in matters so important.[4]

The opposing terms we find in this section--instruct or persuade, knowledge or belief--are grounded in Plato's separation of the immutable, eternal Ideas from the changing, perishing world of appearance, such as we find discussed in the Republic, especially in the diagram of the line[5] and the allegory of the cave.[6] The consequence of this separation of knowledge

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[4]Ibid., 445a.

[5]Plato The Republic, in Plato, vol. 2, trans. Paul Shorey (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, Loeb Classical Library, 1935), bk. 6, 509-511e.

[6]Ibid., 514a-521b.

(episteme) and opinion (doxa) was to confine persuasion, that is, the producer of "belief without knowledge" to the realm of "flattery," a realm shared by cookery and cosmetics (as Socrates says elsewhere in the Gorgias).[7]

In this passage, Plato also makes a distinction between persuasion, from which we get "belief without knowledge," and persuasion, "from which we get knowledge." He clearly rejects the first kind of persuasion, and the second remains undeveloped in the Gorgias. However, this possibility is taken up in the Phaedrus, where some believe Plato developed a "new" rhetoric based upon knowledge.[8]

Rhetoric's "new face" appears in the Phaedrus when she is allowed to speak for herself:

> Why do you extra-ordinary people talk such nonsense? I never insisted on ignorance of the truth on the part of one who would learn to speak; on the contrary, if my advice goes for anything, it is that he should only resort to me after he has come into possession of truth; what I do pride myself on is that without my aid knowledge of what is true will get a man no nearer mastering the art of persuasion.[9]

Whereas in the Gorgias, rhetoric was a sham art because it did not know the "truth" of what it was talking about, here it concedes the subject matter to philosophy and places its skills at the point of delivery. In accordance with this division, rhetoric becomes a "leading of souls" to the "truth"

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[7] Gorgias, p. 463c.

[8] Richard Weaver, "The Phaedrus and the Nature of Rhetoric," in The Ethics of Rhetoric (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, A Gateway Edition, 1970), p. 3f.

[9] Plato Phaedrus, in Plato, vol. 1, trans. H. M. Fowler (New York: The Macmillan Co., Loeb Classical Library, 1914) 260d.

discovered by dialectic.[10]

However, just as one must know the true idea of justice, or any other subject, before he or she can speak about it, so also must one know the nature of the soul before it is possible to "lead" it.[11] The method for knowing the soul's nature is through dialectic, not rhetoric. In other words, both the handling of the subject matter and the means of leading souls must be based on truth, as can be seen in Socrates' plan for speakers.

> The conditions to be fulfilled are these; first you must know the truth about the subject that you speak or write about: that is to say, you must be able to isolate it in definition, and having so defined it you must next understand how to divide it into kinds, until you reach the limit of division; secondly you must have a corresponding discernment of the nature of the soul, discover the types of speech appropriate to each nature, and order and arrange your discourse accordingly. . . . All this must be done if you are to become competent, within human limits, as a scientific practitioner of speech, whether you propose to expound or to persuade.[12]

Rhetoric's claim, that only she is the master of persuasion, seems to be rejected. If the "art of persuasion" must be founded on a full knowledge of the soul's nature, which is known through dialectic, then rhetoric would seem to be unnecessary. Brownstein believes that Plato's purpose was to give rhetoric such an all-encompassing task of complete knowledge that the art would be impossible.[13] On the other hand, Morrow and some others believe that Plato does have a positive

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[10]Ibid., 261a. [11]Ibid., p. 271a. [12]Ibid., 277b.

[13]Oscar Brownstein, "Plato's Phaedrus: Dialectic as the Genuine Art of Speaking," Quarterly Journal of Speech LI (December 1959):397.

concept of persuasion; namely that of "leading souls."[14] Morrow sees Plato's scheme of education in the Republic as a detailed application of the art in which philosophical rules "design and control the means of instruction so as to lead the souls of their citizens along the paths of conduct that philosophical wisdom shows to be right."[15] Even if we agree that Plato does offer a concept of persuasion that is outside of the rhetorical perspective of the sophists, we must ask: what are the consequences of this achievement?

The most important consequence is the demeaning of opinions or doxa. Unfortunately, the current usage of the term "opinion" does not carry the significance which doxa really connotes. Rosenfield points out that the root of doxa, "dokeimoi," could lead us to translate doxa as "it seems to me," or "appears."

> In other words, doxa would mean for a people who trusted their own senses "that which appears to anyone who has a certain perspective appears also to me." In this sense, doxa becomes that aspect of the whole of reality which the individual recognizes and shares with others.[16]

In other words, doxa is the way things appear to us. It is grounded in the sociality of knowledge, and provides the basis for the ways we carry on our communal life. It is a sense of the common.

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[14]Glenn R. Morrow, "Plato's Concept of Persuasion," Philosophical Review 62 (1953):236.

[15]Ibid., p. 238.

[16]Lawrence W. Rosenfield, "An Autopsy of the Rhetorical Tradition," in The Prospect of Rhetoric, ed. Lloyd Bitzer and Edwin Black (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1971), p. 65.

Plato's victory has meant a deep distrust of the realm of the common and the knowledge from everyday experience. Furthermore, where Plato has prevailed one can usually find a distaste for the impurities of arguments and debates, because it is the realm of doxa which provides the mixture of agreements and disagreements which make for argumentation.

So, when Plato removes persuasion from the realm of doxa, the possibility of argumentation is discarded. Instead of engaging in the give and take of everyday life, the strategy is one of "enchantment" or training. Persuasion, in such a situation, becomes manipulation because the speaker discounts the beliefs of the community and seeks to lead them to his or her idea of truth through whatever means available.

Plato's student, Aristotle, provided an alternative to this monistic view of knowledge, and developed a theory of rhetoric which took the doxa of the political community seriously. Whereas Plato believed that all serious speaking should either strive for, or proceed from, the same source--philosophic knowledge--Aristotle made the simple and yet enlightening observation that language is used for different purposes in different circumstances. Not all utterances have to do with truth and falsity.

> Every sentence is significant, but not every sentence is a statement-sentence, but only those in which there is truth or falsity. There is not truth or falsity in all sentences; a prayer is a sentence, but is neither true or false . . . a consideration of them belongs rather to the study of rhetoric or poetry.[17]

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[17]Aristotle On Interpretation, trans. J. L. Akrill (Oxford; Clarendon Press, 1963), 16b.33.

This observation allowed Aristotle to make important distinctions based upon the purpose in using language, with corresponding criteria. If the purpose is scientific knowledge, then the speech would be judged for its adequacy in expressing the subject matter, that is, whether the statement corresponds to the thing expressed. If the purpose is practical knowledge, then the speech comes under the criteria of its effects upon desires and convictions. Finally, if the purpose is the creation of products, that is, productive knowledge, such as poetics, then the criteria for judging its use is the quality achieved in the product.[18] Language use may be either logical, practical, or productive, or, when we move to the rhetorical use of language, the three possible uses of language are logical, rhetorical, and poetic.[19]

Although the use of these distinctions has probably been the exception rather than the norm in Western cultural history, they do help to explain the main thrust of rhetoric, and for Aristotle were useful in restoring both rhetoric and poetic from Plato's ban. Briefly, the differences are the following. Whereas logic, including dialectic, was concerned with the terms of language and their relations, rhetoric viewed language as communication and therefore always saw speaking in terms of the audience. Also, rhetoric's domain is that of the probable, in contrast to logic's domain of the

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[18] Richard McKeon, "Aristotle's Conception of Language and the Arts of Language," Classical Philology XLI (October 1946):195.

[19] Ibid., p. 196.

true and false. Dialectic, like rhetoric, begins with opinions but unlike rhetoric does not keep the listeners integrally related to its deliberations. Rhetoric, instead of making objects (artifacts) its end, as does poetics, has the end of persuasion. "Rhetoric, like medicine and political science, is defined as a power or faculty, while poetics is defined as a concrete object."[20] Another difference between rhetoric and poetics is that the poetic audience, usually more general than the rhetorical audience, receives from poetics the "proper pleasure," while the rhetorical audience receives belief (pistis). On the other hand, when the "making" of artifacts, such as a tragic drama, takes up the questions of thought and diction, it should turn to rhetoric so that the thoughts are convincing and clear for the audience. Finally, whereas the poet works in terms of imitation, and creates an artifact that shows what something might be like, rhetoric proceeds by the discovery of ways in which persuasion may be effective in concrete situations. "Rhetoric may be defined as the faculty of observing in a given case the available means of persuasion."[21]

The most important result of these distinctions was to give space for the study of how people work through speech in making public decisions, in rendering judgments in courts,

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[20]Richard McKeon, "Rhetoric and Poetic in the Philosophy of Aristotle," in Aristotle's Poetics and English Literature. ed. Elder Olson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Gemini Books, 1965), p. 230.

[21]Rhetoric 2. 1.

and in celebrating their heroes and communal life. These three situations, the public assembly, the court, and communal celebrations, provided the three audiences for rhetoric, in Aristotle's view, and therefore determined the three kinds of rhetoric: deliberative, forensic, and epideictic.

> The kinds of Rhetoric are three in number, corresponding to the three kinds of hearers. For every speech is composed of three parts: the speaker, the subject of which he treats, and the person to whom it is addressed, I mean the hearer, to whom the end or object of the speech refers. Now the hearer must necessarily be either a mere spectator or a judge, and a judge either of things past or of things to come. For instance, a member of the general assembly is a judge of things to come; the dicast, of things past; the mere spectator, of the ability of the speaker. Therefore there are necessarily three kinds of rhetorical speeches, deliberative, forensic, and epideictic.[22]

One interesting consequence of Aristotle's view of rhetoric, which has not always been seen in the tradition of rhetoric, is that of the three constituents of speech: the speaker, the subject matter, and the audience; the audience has priority over the other two. The correct ordering of the terms would be audience, speaker, and subject matter. (For Plato, the order would be speaker, speech, and audience.) Of course all three are integral aspects of communication, but how one orders them will indicate the importance that is given to the listener's participation in the construction of something to say.

These three constituents of the speaking situation are also the "modes of persuasion." The audience's priority over

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[22]Ibid., 1. 2. 3.

the speaker and subject matter influences how these modes are perceived. The speaker, as a mode of persuasion, must present himself in such a way that the audience sees him as having good sense, virtue, and good will.[23] How the speaker sees himself, in this context, has no persuasive value. The value lies rather in the way the audience sees him. Equally with the subject matter, the arguments which are given must be based upon the opinions or doxa of the audience, and they must be debatable in the eye of the audience.

> The function of Rhetoric, then, is to deal with things about which we deliberate, but for which we have no systematic rules; and in the presence of such hearers as are unable to take a general view of many stages, or to follow a lengthy chain of argument. But we only deliberate about things which seem to admit of issuing in two ways; as for those things which cannot in the past, present, or future be otherwise, no one deliberates about them, if he supposes that they are such; for nothing would be gained by it.[24]

In contrast to Plato's strategy of leading the hearers away from their perceptions and beliefs, Aristotle's rhetoric moves towards them for the discovery of the modes of persuasion which exist in concrete situations. The scope of rhetoric is defined by those issues "that ultimately depend on our selves and which we have in our power to set going."[25]

Such emphasis upon the audience might lead one to be concerned that rhetoric is nothing more than a servant to mass opinions and that pragmatics without an accompanying critique is inadequate. Several responses to this concern

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[23]Ibid., 2. 1. 5. [24]Ibid., 1. 2. 12.

[25]Ibid., 1. 4. 9.

are implied in Aristotle's rhetorical theory, and in his other works as well.

First of all, rhetoric does raise the question of the trust that doxa, or we could say, common sense, should receive. Public argumentation depends upon communal agreements, not only upon the meaning of words, that is, a common language, but also upon some agreement about the goals and purposes of the community or state. In this sense rhetoric, in order to survive, must be concerned with the maintenance of a public sensibility. Aristotle does not dwell upon this in his rhetoric, but rather assumes that the audience consists of the Athenian minority who were citizens of the polis. In an insightful article on the intended uses of Artistotle's Rhetoric, J. Robert Olian offers the following explanation for the allowances which Aristotle gives to the audience, and to the rhetor.

> The Rhetoric is, therefore, largely descriptive because it was constructed upon the premise that men of virtue would control the persuasive process. It provides no explicit ethical advice, because it assumes that standards of ethical behavior would be correctly determined by the few men who applied the art of persuasion to the total society.[26]

This assumption is important to recognize. As Walter Jens has shown, the rhetorical tradition contained an aristocratic element which in retrospect prevents one from speaking of a "people's rhetoric" in Classical culture.[27] At the same time,

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[26] J. Robert Olian, "The Intended Uses of Aristotle's Rhetoric," Speech Monographs XXXV (June 1968):148.

[27] Walter Jens, "Rhetorik," in Reallexikon der Deutschen Literaturgeschichte, Dritter Band, Fünfte Lieferung (Berlin, Walter de Gruyter, 1971), pp. 438-9.

the question of trustworthiness remains. It seems to me the rhetorical perspective raises that question in a significant way. If we are to live together through discourse, rather than through violence, then the public must find ways to nurture a commonness within the context of change. Plato and Aristotle's rhetoric provide two alternative ways of viewing doxa, and correspondingly two different views of the public.

One analogy which has been a favorite in describing rhetoric is Zeno's open hand and closed fist. The open hand of rhetoric represented the expansiveness and inclusiveness of rhetoric, in contrast to the compactness and exclusiveness of dialectic or logic. In terms of the Aristotelian tradition, which has not been a dominant tradition in rhetorical theory, the open hand may represent an openness to the listeners, and the closed fist may represent those perspectives of discourse which exclude the listeners.

For Aristotle, rhetoric is a method of persuasion that includes the listeners from the beginning. Because it is a method, and is neither a particular subject-matter nor a random experiment influencing audiences, its quality depends upon the proper means of persuasion. "It's [rhetoric's] function is not simply to succeed in persuasion, but rather to discover the means of coming as near such success as the circumstances of each particular case allow."[28] The method is not one of simply using persuasive techniques, but rather of discovering what is persuasive in particular situations.

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[28] Rhetoric 1. 1. 14.

At the basis of Aristotle's method is the enthymeme, which is a rhetorical means of interpreting situations for persuasive ends. This method will be discussed in detail in the third chapter, and will further clarify the rhetorical perspective created in Aristotle's rhetoric.

A final aspect of Aristotle's view of rhetoric that should not be excluded is his treatment of the emotions. Some have held that rhetoric was a discipline or art of arousing emotions, and no doubt the emotional response has always been a concern for rhetoric. Quintilian expressed the common view found in Roman rhetoric, and in some writings of the sophists: "For it is in its power over the emotions that the life and soul of oratory is to be found."[29] Aristotle proves to be somewhat of an exception in this regard. For him the emotions which are important for rhetoric are open to reasoning. In terms of the emotions, Aristotle followed Plato's plea for a knowledge of the soul upon which one would base a rhetorical practice. However, as Fortenbaugh has shown, it was not simply knowledge of the emotions which characterized Aristotle's treatment, but rather a method of incorporating the emotional aspect of belief in the argumentative process.

> By construing thought or belief as the efficient cause of emotion, Aristotle showed that emotional response is intelligent behaviour open to reasoned persuasion. When men are angered, they are not victims of some totally irrational force. Rather they are responding in accordance with the thought of unjust insult. Their belief may be erroneous and their anger unreasonable, but their behaviour is intelligent

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[29]Quintilian Institutio 6. 2. 7.

> and cognitive in the sense that it is grounded upon a belief which may be criticised and even altered by argumentation.[30]

Of course not all emotions are "practical" in the sense that anger, fear, and the other emotions Aristotle discusses in the Rhetoric are. Some are closer to moral dispositions, as for example, friendliness.[31] The significance of Aristotle's theory of the emotions today is that he placed them in the arena of debate. There are "reasons" for being angry. Instead of the privatization of the emotions which is prevalent today, classical rhetoric saw them as "practical" and as a reasonable basis for public and political action.

In many ways, Aristotle's Rhetoric is a curious mixture of a philosophical treatise and a handbook on rhetoric, and even though it represents some of the best "thought" on rhetoric, for the most part, it does not represent the rhetorical "spirit." Although several rhetoricians could be called upon to show this aspect of rhetoric, probably none have done it as well as Cicero.

For Cicero, persuasion was almost a universal element of human activity. Being an orator himself, he knew its powers firsthand. Kennedy characterized Cicero's stance toward rhetoric as follows:

> Cicero was convinced from personal experience of the power and richness of oratory. It was to him a true art form . . . in the modern sense of art as a product of the creative imagination. . . . He was a rhetorician

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[30] W. W. Fortenbaugh, Aristotle on Emotion (New York: Harper & Row, 1975), p. 17.

[31] Ibid., p. 32.

in his innermost fiber.[32]

"Possessing wisdom combined with eloquence," Cicero's orator would be something like Plato's philosopher king, involving himself not with the implementation of pre-established truths, but rather with the actualization of the social possibilities.[33] He also denied the separation between thought and speech, which he saw in Socrates and Plato.

> From him [Socrates] came that separation of the tongue from the heart, a separation according to which some teach us to think and others teach how to speak--a separation which is absurd, useless, and positively reprehensible.[34]

Uniting teaching and persuading, Cicero distinguishes between three "offices" of rhetoric: to teach (docere), to delight (delectare), and to move (movere). Corresponding to these three offices were the three rhetorical styles of the plain, moderate, and grand.[35] These divisions were common in much of the rhetorical tradition, and even though there has been a tendency in rhetoric to slight the first (teaching) and to emphasize the other two (delighting and moving), the three should be held together for an adequate conception of rhetoric.

This perspective which included three offices and styles was what Kennedy calls Cicero's "rhetorical view of the world"; a view that held that the decisions to be made were to be made on the basis of "circumstances, probabilities, and ex-

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[32]George Kennedy, The Art of Rhetoric in the Roman World (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), p. 225.

[33]De Oratore 3. 35. 142.

[34]Ibid., 3. 15. 56.

[35]Ibid., 2. 29. 128.

pediences."[36] Meador has traced Cicero's "view of the world" to the sceptic philosophy of the Academy, where it was believed that absolute knowledge, even if it did exist, was not knowable, and furthermore, that probable truth was a necessary and sufficient guide for life.[37] In his analysis of Cicero's philosophy, Meador contends that Cicero's philosophy has not been given enough attention and often has been criticized without adequate study. He lists the following four aspects of Cicero's beliefs.

> --the notion of "universal law" takes on new meaning by being transformed into a broad ideal.
>
> --due to the nature of man and society, probable truth is valid for practical life.
>
> --the attainment of the good requires the full self-realization of man as a social creature.
>
> --justice, as active virtue, has its field in human society through oratory.[38]

In other words, knowledge or philosophy becomes a servant of justice, which is realized by the orator, who engages in the powers of speech for the fulfillment of the community and of himself. In Cicero's own encomium on oratory, he put it this way:

> In every free nation, and most of all in communities which have attained the enjoyment of peace and tranquility, this one art has always flourished above the rest and ever reigned supreme. . . . To come, however, at length to the highest achievement of eloquence, what other power could have been strong

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[36] Kennedy, Roman Rhetoric, p. 249.

[37] Prentice A. Meador, Jr., "Rhetoric and Humanism in Cicero," Philosophy and Rhetoric III (Winter 1970):8.

[38] Ibid., pp. 7-10.

> enough either to gather scattered humanity into one place, or to lead it out of its brutish existence in the wilderness to our present condition of civilization as men and as citizens, or, after the establishment of social communities, to give shape to laws, tribunals, and civil rights?[39]

The "highest achievements of oratory" for Cicero, and for Roman oratory in general, were assumed to be primarily due to the performance of the rhetor. In contrast to the audience-orientated rhetoric in Aristotle's Rhetoric, where the audience, speech, and the speaker, were all modes of persuasion, for Cicero, the speaker is almost the only mode of persuasion. The "character" of the speaker is not seen in terms of the audience's perception, but rather in terms of the well-educated, active citizen. In a sense, the orator, rather than situations, embody rhetoric. The following list of requirements indicates Cicero's assumption of the "place" of oratory.

> But of an orator we must demand the subtlety of the logician, the thoughts of the philosopher, a diction almost poetic, a lawyer's memory, a tragedian's voice, and the bearing almost of the consummate actor.[40]

Cicero's concentration upon the training and skills of the orator seems to result in giving little attention to the analysis of the opinions and beliefs of the audience, not because Cicero disrespected them, as did Plato, but because the power of communication was taken up into speech and the speaker, rather than distributed between the three constituents of the situation, the speaker, speech, and audience. Kennedy believes that in this instance, Cicero reflects a

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[39] De Oratore 1. 8. 31-34. [40] Ibid., 1. 28. 128.

general difference between Roman and Greek rhetoric.

> A Greek orator tends to argue his audience into believing something; a Roman by his authority convinces the audience that something should be believed because he says so, though the observation must not be pushed too far since there is some self-esteem in Demosthenes and much in Isocrates.[41]

Kennedy reminds us of another aspect of Cicero which we have already noted: his respect for the teachings of Isocrates, whom he once called the "eminent father of eloquence."[42] The principal agreement between Isocrates and Cicero seems to be their common estimation of the power and effectiveness of rhetoric in political life. In regard to the scope and the power of rhetoric, Aristotle appears much more conservative, and it is Cicero who gives us a glimpse of the excitement that must have propelled the interest in rhetoric throughout the whole Classical period.

Robert Scott, in an article on the epistemic character of rhetoric, seems to echo that rhetorical perspective of the world when he writes:

> Insofar as we can say that there is truth in human affairs, it is in time; it can be a result of a process of interaction at a given moment. Thus rhetoric may be viewed not as a matter of giving effectiveness to truth, but of creating truth.[43]

It is this perspective of discourse which seems significant for our contemporary situation. Instead of the Platonic demeaning of the common sense of the people, and the

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[41]Kennedy, Roman Rhetoric, p. 42.

[42]De Oratore 2. 3. 10. See Kennedy, Roman Rhetoric, pp. 208-9.

[43]Robert Scott, "On Viewing Rhetoric as Epistemic," Central States Speech Journal XVIII (February 1967):13.

search for an other-worldly truth, rhetoric would focus upon the possibilities within the beliefs and experiences of its audience for the discovery of what needs and can be effectively said. The question as to what will be discovered in concrete situations cannot be fully answered by rhetoric, since it is primarily a method of discovery and expression. It assumes the continuing conversation among the people about the character and quality of their life together, and it is within this continuing conversation that rhetoric finds its place as a means of facilitating the development of speech which will clarify issues and enable decisions.

CHAPTER II

THE RHETORICAL SITUATION

Just as in Classical rhetoric one finds a plurality of rhetorical perspectives, so also in contemporary rhetorical studies, there are Platonic, Aristolelian, and Sophistic-Ciceronian approaches to rhetorical discourse. There have been proposals for a "new rhetoric" as well, which intend to move beyond the paradigms of the Classical period. However, I suppose that what is truly "new" is the revival of rhetoric itself. The new interpretations of the old rhetoric, such as we find in the works of McKeon and Kennedy, seem to belong just as much to contemporary rhetoric as the "new" rhetoric of such writers as Burke or Perelman.[1] Alongside these major writers, the numerous contributions from students of rhetoric found in journals and books, from Classical, modern, and inter-disciplinary points of view, have created a new horizon for interpreting the world rhetorically. The net result of these many explorations is the opening of new possibilities for participating both in the tradition of rhetoric and its future.

[1]For proposals of a "new rhetoric" see Chaim Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca, The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation, trans. John Wilkinson and Purcell Weaver (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969); Kenneth Burke, The Rhetoric of Motives (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969); and Martin Steinmann, ed., New Rhetorics (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1969). George Kennedy's and Richard McKeon's studies were cited extensively in chapter I.

Even with the plurality of interests and approaches in contemporary rhetoric, the importance of the audience as a basic constituent of discourse has become generally recognized. Thomas Sloan, in a recent article, distinguished twentieth-century rhetoric from earlier theory by its shift from an emphasis upon the speaker or orator to the auditor and reader.[2]

> In sum, the basic rhetorical perspective is simply this: all utterance, except perhaps the mathematical formula, is aimed at influencing a particular audience at a particular time and place, even if the only audience is the speaker or writer himself; any utterance may be interpreted rhetorically by being studied in terms of its situation--within its original milieu or within its relationship to any reader or hearer--as if it were an argument.[3]

The emphasis upon the audience involves much more than statistical analysis of public opinion. It involves such questions as how addressees "supply" what there is to say, how the total "communication environment" functions as a medium,[4] and how modern commonplaces function in the interpretation of experience.[5] In other words, the "audience" is seen as an integral element of discourse that co-creates what is said from the very beginning.

Of course listening does not make discourse. The interrelationships of the audience, speaker, and subject-matter

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[2]Sloan, p. 798. [3]Ibid., p. 803.

[4]Samuel Becker, "Rhetorical Studies for the Contemporary World," in The Prospect of Rhetoric, ed. Lloyd Bitzer and Edwin Black (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1971), p. 26. Report of the National Development Project; this collection of essays hereinafter referred to as The Prospect of Rhetoric.

[5]Richard McKeon, "Creativity and the Commonplace," Philosophy and Rhetoric 6 (Fall 1973).

function together. The question is: what does the audience contribute to discourse and to the identity of the speaker and the subject-matter? Or, what does the communicative situation look like when the audience is seen as an integral part of the situation? This chapter will attempt to provide resources for answering these questions.

In this exploration, we shall employ one of the present strengths of rhetorical studies, namely the combination of traditional, contemporary, and inter-disciplinary approaches. From the traditional, especially Aristotle's Rhetoric, offers an important discussion on audiences; in contemporary studies, rhetoricians such as Lloyd Bitzer and Chaim Perelman have made contributions which can give us directions, even when it seems better not always to take the precise road they suggest; and from other disciplines, philosophical phenomenology can be particularly helpful. Although at present these studies have not been systematic in their treatment of the audience, they do provide a number of insightful vistas into the issue. Our goal will not be to complete a general synthesis, but rather to engage in an exploration of some of the key issues concerning the character and function of audiences in discourse. These issues are: the relationship between audience and rhetorical discourse, the question of actual and constructed audiences, the difference between universal and particular audiences, and finally the audience's effect upon the speakers's speech.

The Audience and Rhetoric

One important sign of the new interest in rhetoric was the founding of the journal, Philosophy and Rhetoric, in 1968. The lead article by Lloyd Bitzer was entitled "The Rhetorical Situation," which has been borrowed for the title of this chapter.[6] Because audiences belong to discourse, the notion of "situation" serves well to designate the context for our discussion. So, we will begin by describing what a situation and a rhetorical situation might be.

One way to understand "situation" is to set it in the context of everyday life. If everyday life is understood as the on-going conversations that constitute and maintain our common language, history, and sociality, entailing our taken-for-granted assumptions about the meanings of words and work, then situations may be understood as occasions where some of these assumptions become questioned or inoperative. At such times, we find ourselves in a quandary about what to do or what to believe, and the continuity of everyday life is interrupted. At the same time, other assumptions usually remain operative, and they provide a foundation for interpreting the "situation." Furthermore, the remaining assumptions allow us to move through the situations and to integrate the old and the new into new constellations. Situations may differ widely depending upon the extent to which assumptions are questioned,

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[6]Lloyd Bitzer, "The Rhetorical Situation," reprinted in Contemporary Rhetoric: A Reader's Coursebook, ed. Douglas Ehninger (Glenview, Illinois: Scott, Foreman, and Company, 1972), pp. 39-49. This collection of essays hereinafter referred to as Contemporary Rhetoric.

as well as upon the adequacy of remaining assumptions for the task of interpretation and re-integration. For example, if our assumptions about the meaning of words become partially questioned then it is possible to create new meanings for old words and even new words. But if all of our assumptions about the meanings of words are questioned, then obviously communication becomes impossible. The situation simply becomes absurd. So the inter-dependence between situations and everyday life is fundamental. The continuing conversations of everyday life are the matrix for situations, and they allow "situations" to be recognizable. At the same time, situations allow the assumptions of everyday life to be questioned, changed, or revived. The two together constitute a dynamic exchange between the familiar and the strange.

Situations are then times and places where, in the course of everyday life, assumptions and beliefs become contested and there emerges an awareness that it is time "to deal with the situation."

Bitzer suggests that situations are "rhetorical" if discourse is a viable means of dealing with the situation.[7] He uses the word "exigence" to name that which initially defines the situation, and if the exigence can be modified by discourse, then it is rhetorical. However, if we understand "discourse" as speaking or writing with words, then Bitzer's definition may be too confining. For example, street demonstrations are persuasive, as are acts of love. It seems to

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[7]Ibid., p. 43.

me that what makes a situation rhetorical is the presence of listeners. There must be someone to persuade, even if it is the speaker's self. If we accept this definition, then a situation passes beyond its rhetorical character when the listener is no longer respected as one who is listening. For example, when violence destroys listening, either through destroying the listener or through other acts which destroy the ability or motivation to listen, then the situation no longer can be called rhetocical. Rhetoric assumes, as Perelman says, "the will on the part of the orator to persuade and not to compel or command, and a disposition on the part of the audience to listen."[8] Of course these agreements are often missing, and a continual task of rhetorical practice and theory is to seek means that allow listening to become an actual possibility. Listening is the mark of a rhetorical situation.

Since most discourse has an audience, or in the case of literature, an implied audience,[9] Bitzer's equation of rhetoric with discourse is easily understood. However, discourse can become deceptive or manipulative and thereby destroy the possibility for listening as effectively as phsyical violence. "Speaking" in itself does not guarantee listening. Speaking or writing may become either so coercive or hypocritical that it moves beyond rhetoric just as physical violence usually

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[8]Chaim Perelman, "The New Rhetoric and Theory of Practical Reasoning," in The Great Ideas Today (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, 1970).

[9]See Wayne C. Booth, The Rhetoric of Fiction (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), pp. 89f.

moves beyond rhetoric.

To create and preserve the possibility for listening requires that the audience possess the freedom of choice. Simply said, in order to persuade, the audience must be persuadable, which means that there exists the real possibility that an audience can be taught, delighted, and moved. "Persuasion involves choice, will; it is directed to a man only insofar as he is free. . . . Only insofar as men are potentially free, must the spellbinder seek to persuade them."[10] Burke's use of the term "spellbinder" may appear unfortunate, but it reminds us that the assumption of freedom does not exclude a lively performance, as long as that performance does not destroy its own basis, which is the audience's freedom to choose the character of its participation. A situation is no longer rhetorical when this freedom is destroyed, which can happen through words as well as action.

Some rhetoricians may find it strange to discover this ethical principle in rhetoric, for traditionally rhetoric has posed as a neutral discipline, able to argue both sides of a question. However, the experiences of totalitarianism, where free speech has been one of the first victims, should have clarified the issue. If rhetoric is concerned with its own survival, then it must seek to preserve the possibility of persuasion. The preservation of this possibility is not an ethical concept imposed upon rhetoric, but rather an internal principle, necessary for its existence. John O'Neill

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[10]Burke, p. 50.

has shown us that this awareness of the relation between rhetoric and a civic community was already voiced by the sophists.

> For dialectic may persuade at the expense of the moral community to which it appeals, thereby undermining the true place of rhetoric. For these reasons Isocrates sought to make rhetoric service the ideals of paideia, that is, to correct the alternatives of intellectual arrogance and Platonic spiritualism with the commonplaces of community and nation. In this manner Isocrates understood that rhetoric's own seat is its place within the life of the community whose discourse it strengthens in order, in turn, to draw upon it for its own special eloquence.[11]

The "art of speaking" must entail the creation and maintenance of the possibility of listening if it is to preserve its own future. Again we see that the audience is a mark of the rhetorical situation.

To summarize this initial description of what makes a situation rhetorical, we can say that the basic element of a rhetorical situation is the presence of listeners, either actual or implied, who are taken to be free and responsible. They have the capacity to respond in the communicative act. Just what kind of capacity this is will be further considered in the following section.

Actual and Constructed Audiences

In his article "The Rhetorical Situation," Bitzer offers a definition of rhetoric which presents the audience in such

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[11]John O'Neill, Making Sense Together: An Introduction to Wild Sociology (New York: Harper & Row, Harper Torchbooks, 1974), p. 78. Henry Johnston, Jr., wrote in his essay entitled "The Relevance of Rhetoric to Philosophy and of Philosophy to Rhetoric": "One must persuade only in such a way as to maintain the possibility of persuasion." In Contemporary Rhetoric, p. 129.

a light that the "actual," that is the empirical, aspect of audiences is revealed.

> In short, rhetoric is a mode of altering reality, not by the direct application of energy to objects, but by the creation of discourse which changes reality through the meditation of thought and action. The rhetor alters reality by bringing into existence a discourse of such a character that the audience, in thought and action, is so engaged that it becomes the mediator of change.[12]

As with Bitzer's definition of the "rhetorical situation," his notion of the audience so emphasizes one strength of a rhetorical perspective that its complete character tends to be overlooked. As a "mediator of change" the actual and responsive character of the audience comes into view, however, as to the full character of this audience it seems that Bitzer has unnecessarily limited the rhetorical perspective.

Bitzer's discussion is particularly confusing when he compares the rhetorical audience with the scientific and the poetic. He proposes that just as the scientist's audience must be capable of receiving knowledge, and the poet's audience capable of aesthetic experiences, so also the rhetor's audience must be capable "of serving as mediator of the change which the discourse functions to produce."[13] It is these distinctions between poetic, scientific, and rhetorical audiences that raise important questions, because they presupppose not only that poetics and science have audiences which are non-rhetorical, but also that rhetorical audiences are not known for receiving knowledge or aesthetic experience.

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[12]Bitzer, p. 41. [13]Ibid., p. 44.

So, on the one hand, the strength of Bitzer's definition is that it shows the pragmatic character of audiences, and gives a purpose for their activity. A "mediator" usually works between two parties, and serves as a medium to move from the present conflict to a future resolution. To call the audience a "mediator of change" is to place it in a situation on-the-way towards something. The audience is not the object of the rhetor's discourse, but rather an ally, working with him or her to bring about some change. If the audience is not capable of that, then according to Bitzer it is not a rhetorical audience.

On the other hand, with the distinction between rhetorical and non-rhetorical audiences, Bitzer has eliminated much of the breadth of the rhetorical tradition and perpetuated a common misunderstanding of rhetoric. By limiting the scope of rhetoric, he has separated rhetoric from science and poetics at the point where in fact they become rhetorical, namely in their inclusion of the audience. What a contrast to Cicero's three rhetorical offices of teaching, delighting, and moving.[14] If Cicero's three offices were placed alongside Bitzer's three audiences, then rhetoric would be limited to the office of "moving."

scientific audience----to teach
poetic audience--------to delight
rhetorical audience----to move

For Cicero, these three offices comprised the total scope of rhetoric, and we find in Bitzer the re-appearance

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[14]See p. 24, above.

of a continued misunderstanding of rhetoric as being without knowledge and imagination. He probably does not wish to imply this, but the divisions of audiences that he makes, in spite of the strength that is emphasized through such a division, misses important aspects of the rhetorical notion of audience.

In order to bring these other aspects into focus, we can briefly review Aristotle's notion of audience in his Rhetoric.

In Classical rhetoric, the three basic kinds of audiences were: (1) those who deliberated about future policies and actions in the general assembly; (2) those who make judgments about past actions in the court; and (3) those who listened to speeches of display in public ceremonies. Corresponding to these three institutional situations were the three types of rhetoric: deliberative; forensic; and ceremonial, or epideictic.[15] Each had its own criteria: deliberative rhetoric must meet the criterion of expediency; forensic, the criterion of justice; and epideictic, the criterion of honor. So the main differences between the three were their temporal focus (future, past, and present) and their criteria (expediency, justice, and honor). Although these audiences corresponded to the institutions of Athenian political life, and not contemporary society, they at least represent a minimum scope for rhetorical audiences today.

If these three kinds of rhetoric are indicative of the scope of rhetorical audiences, then it would seem that the

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[15] Rhetoric 1. 3. 5.

notion of "mediators of change," by itself is too narrow. It might apply to deliberative rhetoric, and perhaps indirectly to forensic, but would not include epideictic.

Epideictic oratory has always had an important place in rhetoric, and one easily finds it even in forensic and deliberative speeches. Traditionally, it included such speeches as those honoring rulers and heros, funeral eulogies, and hymns to the gods.[16] The hearers, according to Aristotle, functioned as spectators, in contrast to their function as "judges" in deliberative and forensic rhetoric. The two usual purposes of epideictic were the praising (or blaming) of the speech's "subject" and the displaying of the orator's skill in doing so.

In the process of praising someone, the orator would appeal to the beliefs and values of his audience, and in this way, at least indirectly, reinforce those beliefs and values. Perelman has emphasized this aspect of epideictic oratory and extended its importance so as to place epideictic within the scope of a rhetoric of argumentation. He sees the argumentative value in its ability to strengthen "the disposition toward action by increasing adherence to the values it lauds."[17]

Perelman's interpretation of epideictic oratory recognizes another aspect of this mode of rhetoric which has important consequences for understanding rhetoric as a whole.

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[16]Theodore Burgess, "Epideictic Literature," Studies in Classical Philology 3 (1900):89f.

[17]Perelman, p. 50.

He has written of the epideictic orator:

> The speaker tries to establish a sense of communion centered around particular values recognized by the audience, and to this end he uses the whole range of means available to the rhetorician for purposes of amplification and enhancement.[18]

In other words, the epideictic orator assists the formation of community, and a bond among people based upon common values. Modern examples of epideictic rhetoric, such as the President's urging Americans as "Americans" to sacrifice for their country, or a preacher's exhortation that the congregation become more committed to their common beliefs, demonstrate that epideictic rhetoric views audiences as communal, believers, and as agents. The disposition toward action must be seen as an integral part of action itself.

Aristotle was not unaware of the argumentative value of epideictic oratory. "To praise a man is in one respect akin to urging a course of action."[19] He can say this because what one praises and what one advocates rely upon the same hierarchy of values. "Consequently, whenever you want to praise any one, think what you would urge people to do, and when you want to urge the doing of anything, think what you would praise a man for having done."[20]

It may seem strange that epideictic oratory introduces the ethical question into rhetorical discourse, and yet, if a speaker desires change, then the required response to the exigence of a situation shall be shaped by what the particular

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[18]Ibid., p. 51. [19]Rhetoric 1. 9. 1367b. 35.

[20]Ibid., 1. 9. 1368. 7-8.

community honors and dishonors. The value system and beliefs of the audience are the foundation for encouraging a course of action. Therefore the audience must be seen as "believers" as well as "mediators of change."

When we look at the three kinds of rhetoric suggested to us by Aristotle, we now see that they overlap and that a rigid separation of action from knowledge or imagination misses the point. Just as knowledge of what is possible and probable is necessary for the audience to make judgments in deliberative and forensic rhetoric, so also is imagination necessary for epideictic rhetoric, as the use of rhetorical figures and tropes vividly demonstrates. What is "rhetorical" is the audience's responsibility (ability-to-respond) in the discourse itself. To the degree that the audience's beliefs and values are creatively included in the discourse, that responsibility is potentially provided.

So, instead of speaking of rhetorical and non-rhetorical audiences, it makes more sense to speak of rhetorical and non-rhetorical discourse. To the extent that the audience of any discourse co-determines what is said and how it is said, then that discourse is engaging in a rhetorical relationship with the listeners. If poetics, as some claim, is "art for art's sake," then it would be beyond the scope of rhetoric, and the same would be true of "disinterested" science. However, to the degree that these disciplines take a stance toward their listeners, they move into the area of rhetoric.

If the capacity of the audience were to determine an

audience identity, then the capacity of the rhetorical audience would at least correspond to the four purposes of rhetoric which George Campbell names in his Philosophy of Rhetoric: "All the ends of speaking are reducible to four; every speech being intended to enlighten the understanding, to please the imagination, to move the passions, and to influence the will."[21] However, just what an audience's capabilities are cannot be adequately understood by listing different "faculties." Instead, the audience capacity comes into existence through the exchange between the "givens" of the situations and what speech "gives." The audience "in discourse" is always "on the move," and comes into being, for the speaker through the performance. At the same time, the speaker must take into account the "constraints" of the situation if the speech is to be effective. It is the dynamic between the situational constraints and the speaker's speech that allows a fuller understanding of the audience's function in discourse.

One should not assume that "constraints" are simply negative. Bitzer defines constraints as those aspects of a situation which "have the power to constrain decision and action needed to modify the exigence." The sources for constraint are "beliefs, attitudes, documents, facts, traditions images, interests, motives, and so on."[22] They are the particularities of a situation, and have a dual, almost para-

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[21]George Campbell, The Philosophy of Rhetoric, ed. Lloyd Bitzer (Southern Illinois University Press, 1963), p. 1.

[22]Bitzer, p. 44.

doxical, character. They are limiting, in the sense that every situation has its own particular sources for persuasion which must be taken into account, but, because they are particular, they do provide a basis for persuasion and action.

When we speak of "constraints" in a particular situation, it is important to recognize that there may be more than one audience which enters into the speaker's speech construction. Hugh Duncan lists five different audiences, and suggests that the speaker may be speaking to more than one at once. The five are:

1. the general public, a "they"
2. the community guardians, who are delegated by the community as guardians of order
3. others significant to us as friends and intimates
4. audiences we address in soliloquy and all forms of talking to oneself
5. the "final" audience we invoke to sustain order in social relationships.[23]

A good illustration of different audiences has been presented by Edmond Pincoffs' description of the different audiences a judge faces when he justifies his decision in a legal case.[24]

Pincoffs believes that the judge has at least three audiences, each with its own criteria for evaluating the correctness of the judge's decision. First there is the audience of other judges and the legal institution who are

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[23]Hugh Dalziel Duncan, "The Need for Clarification in Social Models of Rhetoric," in The Prospect of Rhetoric, p. 145.

[24]Edmond Pincoffs, "The Audiences of the Judge," Logique et Analyse (Mar-Juin, 1961):337-344.

interested in the consistency of the decision in terms of the tradition of law. A second audience are the litigants of the specific case, who are interested in fairness. Finally, the general public functions as a third audience, and they are interested in the accruement of benefits or lesses to the public welfare. All three audiences are elements of the judge's "situation," even though they may not be equally present. In justifying his decision, the judge must take into account the demands for fairness, consistency, and benefit or loss to the general public. Pincoffs further shows that much of the confusion in legal theory and criticism can be understood as speakers or critics concentrating on one audience and ignoring the others.

> Retributionists tend to speak as if the judge had only the audience of litigants; utilitarians as if he spoke to the general audience alone; traditionalists as if the judge's obligation to his judicial ancestors were the sole obligation which binds him.[25]

Pincoffs' analysis of the judge's audiences would seem to apply to many other situations. He has given us a valuable insight into how we might understand speeches which do not seem to speak to us. Maybe the speaker had another audience in mind, and the audience's constraints, rather than ours, were what co-created his or her speech.

If one thinks of the possible audiences for a contemporary preacher, the list is even longer than that of Pincoffs' judge. It could well include more than one of the following:

--the general public

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[25]Ibid., p. 343.

--the congregation

--an inside group of intimates and friends

--the preacher's self

--the tradition of preaching or the "church"

--former teachers and professors

--special groups in the society, such as the poor

--God

When such lists are made, the assumption is that audiences were simply "out there" and that the rhetor incorporates their constraints into his or her discourse. In some cases this is partially accurate. Our political, religious, and educational institutions are "audience creators," so to speak, and the audience's identity is rather easily recognized. However, in many rhetorical situations, the audience or audiences are ill-defined, and their "appearance" is the task of the speaker.

Assuming the priority of the exigence in creating a rhetorical situation, if the speaker is to respond rhetorically, the persons involved must also recognize the urgency of the exigence, either independently, or with the help of the speaker. If independently, then the stage is set for the speaker, whether he or she emerges from the group of persons, or arrives on the scene from elsewhere, to adopt, initially, the formulated question of the "audience" who has already responded to the exigence. However, if the group(s) is unaware of the exigence, then the rhetor has the task of creating an audience, and then convincing others that they should

be, or in fact are, this audience. Of course this does not mean a license to ignore actual and potential realities of a situation, for if the speaker wishes to persuade, as Perelman says, his construction "should be adequate to the occasion."[26]

If we are to understand the significance of the speaker's "construct" we need to keep in mind the concreteness of the rhetorical situation. A speaker always has a perspective. He or she is "positioned" in the world and initially bound by that position. Others in the situation, also positioned but in different positions, see things differently. So the situation provides, at the outset, a multitude of perspectives. Because we are capable of seeing things from another's point of view, at least to some degree, an interplay of perspectives comes into being, which allows one to see things in a multitude of ways. This interplay and integration of perspectives do not allow a transcendent perspective, totally escaping the concreteness of the situation, but they do allow the formation of commonness and community. The speaker, as one who has taken on the responsibility of articulating this commonness, "constructs" a communal identity which may be appropriate for the others, so "they" see the situation together. In other words, the construction of an audience is a formation process. Both the speaker and audience are formulated in the performance of the speaker.

We have spoken of the audience as situated and at the same time as a construction of the speaker. The two perspec-

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[26]Perelman, p. 19.

tives must be held together. The audience is both "actual" and "imaginary." As McGee suggests, it is real and a fiction simultaneously.[27]

In regard to an adequate conception of audiences, it seems to me that Bitzer and Perelman complement each other. Bitzer's association of the audience with particular situations tends to emphasize the constraints the audience places upon the speaker. Furthermore, his definition of audiences as "mediators of change" indicates the active character of real persons who are capable of responding to situations. Perelman, on the other hand, presents the audience much more from the speaker's point of view. He says that the audience is "the ensemble of those whom the speaker wishes to influence by his argumentation," and for him the argumentation defines the audience more than the audience defines the argumentation.[28] This becomes particularly true when Perelman discusses the universal audience, to which we will now turn.

Universal and Particular Audiences

Perelman distinguishes between two basic types of audiences: the particular and the universal. Which audience the rhetor chooses will greatly affect his or her argument, since the audience will supply the basic agreements upon

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[27]Michael McGee, "In Search of 'the People': A Rhetorical Alternative," Quarterly Journal of Speech 61 (October 1975): 240.

[28]Perelman, p. 19. See John Anderson, "The Audience as a Concept in the Philosophic Rhetoric of Perelman, Johnston, and Natenson," Southern States Speech Journal 38 (Fall 1972): 40.

which the speech is based. By definition, the particular audience will be more limiting than the universal.

> Argumentation aimed exclusively at a particular audience has the drawback that the speaker, by the very fact of the adapting to the views of the listeners, might rely on arguments that are foreign or even directly opposed to what is acceptable to persons other than those he is presently addressing. . . . This explains the relative weakness of arguments that are accepted only by particular audiences and the value attached to opinions by persons or groups who agree on very few matters. . . . Naturally, the value of this unanimity depends on the number and quality of those expressing it. Its highest point is reached when there is agreement of the universal audience. This refers of course, in this case, not to an experimentally proven fact, but to a universality and unanimity imagined by the speaker.[29]

In other words, the "universal audience" is what "everybody knows." Of course, some individuals may disagree about what "everybody knows," but because the function of the construct is to posit universal agreement, dissenters can be ignored. That does not mean that the "universal audience" is inflexible. It is bound to historical periods, and different speakers may imagine different audiences. The point is that when a speaker moves from speaking to specific groups--farmers, men, lawyers, flood victims, etc.--towards an appeal to the "whole of humanity," he or she is addressing a "universal audience." One example of the "universal audience" in current discourse might be seen in the appeal for "human rights" in international politics. Orators, in this case, do appeal to universal agreements, which obviously are not unanimously accepted, but are a "construction" of the speaker. At the same time the agreements may bear some correlation to current

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[29]Perelman, p. 31.

understandings and attachments as to the goal of human society.

In Perelman's discussion of the universal and particular audiences, the difference lies in the kind of agreements assigned to each. The universal audience consists of agreements as to the "real," which include what are taken to be facts, truths, and presumptions. The particular audiences contain agreements as to the "preferable" including values, hierarchies, and what Perelman calls loci of the preferable.[30]

Of course what constitutes a "truth" or "fact" can become disputable, and Perelman agrees that what may be one speaker's universal audience is another's particular.[31] The universal audience itself is not a "fact," but rather a "right."

> Philosophers always claim to be addressing such an audience, not because they hope to obtain the effective assent of all men--they know very well that only a small minority will ever read their works--but because they think that all who understand the reasons they give will have to accept their conclusions. The agreement of the universal audience is thus a matter, not of fact, but of right.[32]

The "right" of philosophers seems to be the presumption of rationality, as Perelman's use of Kant and Dumas in this section of his discussion indicates.

What kind of universal agreements belong to universal audiences is a question that needs more exploration. In terms of our previous discussion of "constructed" audiences, Perelman's notion of the non-factual character of universal audiences has already been accepted. However, it is the other side of our audience equation, its relation to real listeners,

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[30]Ibid., p. 66. [31]Ibid., p. 33. [32]Ibid., p. 31.

that seems to be slighted. If the two-sided conception of audiences developed earlier serves as a reliable guide for any analysis of audiences, and I think it does, then we need to press this point in our discussion of universal and particular audiences.

The distinction Perelman makes between universal and particular audiences, as he admits, remains loose and should not be absolutized. Every person has his or her own "universal audience" as does every culture. Even values, when inserted into a system of beliefs, he says, may be treated as "facts" or "truths."[33] One difference is that whereas it is possible, and perhaps necessary, to appeal to "universal agreements" with particular audiences, it is not possible, or at least not effective, to appeal to particular agreements when arguing with other groups, or appealing to universal audiences.[34]

Perelman further clarifies the distinction between universal and particular audiences through the use of the terms "conviction" and "persuasion." Although he agrees that the difference between these two terms is also vague, as the difference between universal and particular audiences can become vague, he wishes to assign persuasion to agreements with particular audiences and conviction to universal audiences. This division, as Anderson points out, implies that the universal audience is based only upon the universal logical topics, and not upon the topics of ethos or pathos.[35]

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[33]Ibid., p. 77. [34]Ibid., p. 74. [35]Anderson, p. 42.

Perelman's universal audience does seem to develop primarily from the accepted agreements of philosophical reasons. The base of his argument for the character of universal audiences seems to follow observations of how philosophers do argue. Since they must be arguing with someone, their appeal must be to their "constructed" universal audience.

It seems questionable whether this definition of the universal audience is appropriate for rhetoric, even if it is adequate for philosophy. Perelman himself claims that he proposes to unite the topics from dialectic and rhetoric into one discipline; the "new rhetoric."[36] However, the audience he constructs for this purpose appears to be ephemeral and ideal, because it ignores the interests and motives, that is the attachments, which make the arguments worthwhile. From a rhetorical perspective, the universal audience cannot simply take philosophical discourse as its guide.[37] The construction of a "universal audience" must approximate the ways in which people do interpret the world: their construction of reality.

If one wants to construct a universal audience for rhetorical invention, the proper reference for this construction is not the realm of philosophical reflection, but rather the everyday life of a people. The taken-for-granted assumptions of what are facts and truth, based upon common sense and op-

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[36] Perelman, p. 5.

[37] It seems that McGee is correct in his criticism of Perelman's "universal audience," when he says that it ignores "real" people and really is an audience for "intellectual elites" (McGee, p. 238).

erative in everyday interpretations of the value of things, data, and persons, appear to be an appropriate resource from which a speaker can construct a universal audience and to which he or she may appeal. The "universal audience" constructed by the rhetor from such a perspective will both be a "creation" of the rhetor and at the same time, approximate the public realities which the rhetor desires to address.

If we would say that "universal audiences" are those constructs of communal agreements, approximating everyday life, then we can also give the terms "persuasion" and "conviction" different references than if universal audience simply means rational agreement. In this case, convictions would be those everyday assumptions which, until they are challenged, would be held to be true. Since in most situations, not all assumptions are challenged, we usually approach a situation with basic convictions about appropriate responses. In contrast to conviction, persuasion has a more dynamic character, in that it is the particular response to a situation where convictions are being contested. In the English language, we can construct the same distinction between "belief" and "faith." What we believe (statements, ideologies, ways of putting things together) has a more static character, in comparison to "faith," as when we speak of an "act of faith." Our beliefs are, in a sense, the sediments of our faith, just as our convictions can be seen as the sediments of persuasion. However plausible this distinction may be, it is important to remember that the dual terms are peculiar

to the English language, and that in Greek, which is the mother tongue of rhetoric the terms "belief," "faith," "persuasion," and "conviction" are all various forms of the root word pistos.

The difficulty with most separations between persuasion and convictions is that they tend to support a distrust of the dynamics of popular discourse and attempt to "save" "true-knowledge" from the "emotional-field" of persuasion. Convictions seem easier to individualize, to take out of the public arena of ambiguity and compromise, and give one a "sure footing" as to what is "rational." Of course there are some truths, which every reasonable person accepts, but there may well be also some attitudes and emotions which every rational person accepts. If the notions of "universal audience" and "convictions" function to separate reason from sensibility in the audience construction, then the construct will be unacceptable from the rhetorical perspective. In other words, the universal audience must be known for its attachments as well as for its rationality.

One philosopher who has most consistently identified the co-existence of reason and emotion (in his terms, understanding and mood) is Martin Heidegger. In his work Being and Time, he writes of Aristotle's Rhetoric.

> It is not an accident that the earliest systematic interpretation of effects that has come down to us is not treated in the framework of "psychology." Aristotle investigates the pathos (effects) in the second book of his Rhetoric . . . this work of Aristotle must be taken as the first systematic hermeneutic of the everydayness of Being with one another. Publicness as a kind of Being which belongs to the "they" (cf. Section 27), not only has in general its own way of having a mood, but needs moods and "makes" them

> for itself. It is into such a mood and out of such a mood that the orator speaks. He must understand the possibilities of moods in order to rouse them and guide them right.[38]

Aristotle's analysis of the emotions, as Heidegger suggests, is not tied to "particular audiences," but, to use Perelman's category, pertains to "universal audiences." Moods, for Heidegger and for Aristotle, limit the scope for decision-making. "How one is" (which is the literal translation of Heidegger's Befindlichkeit) sets the horizon for what one sees. Hubert Dreyfus explains Heidegger's notion of mood as follows:

> Heidegger believes that we are at every moment in some mood, or feeling, which conditions and sets limits on our understanding and the way we project our possibilities. Mood is always the basis that makes it possible to act in the world at all.[39]

In other words, moods or "state-of-mind" is what makes things "matter."[40] Aristotle puts it this way: "When people are feeling friendly and placable, they think one sort of thing; when they are feeling angry or hostile, they think either something totally different or the same thing with a different intensity."[41] In regard to "universal audiences," we must ask, from an understanding of the significance of moods, what is it that "matters" to the "whole of mankind"? Just as there are various "universal audiences" constructed by different

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[38]Martin Heidegger, Being and Time, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper & Row, Inc., 1962), p. 178.

[39]Hubert Dreyfus, "Heidegger's Existential Phenomenology," Fybate Lecture Notes (Berkeley: Fybate Lecture Notes, 1972), p. 33.

[40]Heidegger, p. 177.

[41]Rhetoric 2. 1. 1377b. 30-35.

periods, writers, and speakers, so also, we could assume, there will be different answers to this question. The point is simply that some answer as to "mood" will be as necessary, especially for a rhetorical audience, as will some answer as to the question of rationality. It seems to me that Heidegger's analysis of everydayness and especially his discussion of mood, understanding, and discourse in sections 23 to 38 of Being and Time are of great potential help in the development of a contemporary rhetorical perspective. Of course this was not the purpose of Heidegger's work, nor has the connection that Heidegger makes with rhetoric been taken up by Heidegger's students as far as I know. However, theological hermeneutics has addressed a similar question in its own way, and we will take this issue up again in parts II and III.

In regard to the audiences in rhetorical situations, our discussion thus far has brought us to the following conclusions. First of all, the inclusion of the audience, with the "constraints" of the situation, marks a rhetorical perspective from other perspectives which tend to ignore these elements in situations. Secondly, the rhetorical audience possesses the capacity to respond, to mediate change, and to intensify beliefs. Thirdly, in many situations, there will be more than one audience listening and responding to the speech, and therefore, more than one "source" for the composition of what the speaker has to say. Fourthly, rhetorical audiences are "constructions," either by exigences, institutions, or the speaker. If constructed by the speaker,

the "audience" must adequately approximate the "real" persons the speaker assumes as hearers. If the audience constructs are to be adequate for persuasion, they will assume the co-existence of emotion and reason. So if one uses the notion of a "universal audience" its proper reference is the everydayness of human existence, which is invested with moods (emotions) and understanding (common sense). This universal audience forms the matrix for the perception and interpretation of rhetorical situations.

The Audience's Effect Upon the Speaker

Given this description of audiences, and of their situation, it is possible to turn to another component of the rhetorical situation, the speaker. The discussion can begin by examining the entry of the speaker into a situation and his involvement in the development of a speech.

In a phenomenological description of the conditions for meaningful speech, Cyril Welch has given four conditions which must be present. The four are the phenomenon of question, the phenomenon of command, the phenomenon of emotion or feeling, and the phenomenon of performance.[42] By briefly reviewing them we can see the dynamics which bring the speaker into a position where it becomes possible for speech to be effective.

First of all, the phenomenon of question, which refers to an encounter in which the speaker is himself or herself

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[42]Cyril Welch, "Speaking and Bespeaking," in New Essays in Phenomenology, ed. James Edie (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1969), p. 72.

questioned. Like Bitzer's "exigence," the phenomenon of question creates the possibility of response. However, for Welch, this questioning involves the speaker in a more totalistic manner. It carries with it the second phenomenon, the phenomenon of command. "The individual who finds himself speaking or hearkening is one who finds that there is something imperative about or within his situation."[43]

The third phenomenon involves the speaker's attachment to the context in which the question and command are experienced. In some way, the speaker finds himself or herself depending on the situation and its outcome. Welch makes an important distinction between attachments to particulars of a situation and the situation as a whole.

> A sentimental attachment to, or feeling for, particular things may not condition the possibility of meaningful speech. But a recognition of being attached to, and motivated by, a vocational and linguistic context having to do with human and non-human beings conditions both the sentiment and the speech.[44]

The vocational and linguistic context, for Welch, primarily refers to the individual speaker's self, and serves as a background which comes forward in the act of speaking. This seems like an unnecessary limitation upon the phenomenon and appears to be due to Welch's total exclusion of the listeners in his analysis. A more adequate description of the phenomenon of attachment would involve the emotional-field created by the vocational and linguistic construct of the total communal and communicating situation. However, Welch's emphasis upon

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[43]Ibid., p. 43. [44]Ibid., p. 78.

the affective character of speaking still has merit. It is precisely the transformation of attachments from particulars to total situations which allows for examination and concernful evaluation of "how one is" and "how things are" in concrete situations.

The fourth condition is the phenomenon of performance. Welch sees performance not as a creation of artifacts, which are then presented to the situation, but rather as a process, which is grounded neither in the subject nor in the speaker, but rather, "in the emergence of a context of interest which elicits the attention of the self and defines the things which are to enter into the formative process."[45] Performance is a formation-process that arises out of the earlier phenomenon: the question, the command, and the attachments. The result, Welch says, is that the speech bespeaks the situation.

Welch did not include the audience in the creation of speech, and his analysis may be extended from a rhetorical perspective. By adding the audience to his description of the conditions for meaningful speech, we can gain a better notion of the speaker's task in the rhetorical situation. Let us look again at the phenomenon of question and of performance through a further elaboration of Welch's ideas of vocational and linguistic constructs.

First of all, the phenomenon of question. Welch's argument is that the questioning is significant if it questions the speaker, so he or she sees himself or herself as

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[45]Ibid., p. 79.

called to answer. However, if we look at communal or public situations, what we discover is that different speakers may feel questioned and may disagree about the "issue" at hand. (Is there any way of judging what the question is?) One means of delimiting the question is the "stasis theory" of classical rhetoric. The theory is found in the writings of Cicero and other Roman rhetoricians and is attributed to Hermagorus. In Cicero, we find the following summary statement: "Every subject which contains any sort of controversy to be settled by speech and debate, involves a question either of act, or of name, or of kind, or of action."[46] This theory was used in forensic rhetoric. The first question or stasis was called the conjectural and asked whether or not something happened. The second stasis was definition. If something did happen, how do we define it? If something did happen, and we agree on what it was, then the third question concerned its quality. What kind of act it was. If agreement is reached on these three question, then the final question was what to do, and in Roman courts, this meant both whether it should be transferred to another court, and how one should interpret the laws which pertain to it. The whole process was a way of "working up a case" through deciding where the point of controversy was. If there was agreement on any of the stasis then the "issue" resided where the agreement ended. Or, if one addressed a later stasis, without securing agreement on the prior ones, then most likely the speech would miss the

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[46]Cicero De Inventione 1. 8. 10.

point and be ineffective.

So when we ask what is questioning the speaker, some type of stasis theory would help us to limit the scope of the question, secure the basic agreements we have with the listeners, and perhaps prevent a careless, romantic response to an undefined or ill-defined "questioned being."

The linguistic context also functions to limit the "issue" which provides the subject-matter. Every situation represents a "language world," or universe of discourse, which offers finite horizons for grasping the world. Kenneth Burke has called this a "terministic screen."

> Not only does the nature of our terms affect the nature of our observations, in the sense that the terms direct the attention to one field rather than to another. Also many of the "observations" are but implications of the particular terminology in terms of which the observations are made.[47]

If the observations we make are for the most part extrapolations of the terms we use, then we could agree with Burke's interpretation of the theological injunction: "Believe so that you may understand."

> The "logological" or "terministic" counterpart of "Believe" in the formula would be: Pick some particular nomenclature, some one terministic screen. And for "That you may understand," the counterpart would be: That you may proceed to track down the kinds of observations implicit in the terminology you have chosen, whether your choice of terms was deliberate of spontaneous.[48]

The significance of Burke's observation can be better

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[47]Kenneth Burke, Language as Symbolic Action (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), p. 46.

[48]Ibid., p. 47.

evaluated if we add to the "linguistic context" the overlapping "vocational context." There are several dimensions of the vocational context, and the most obvious one, namely one's profession or job, would appear to confirm Burke's notion of terministic screens. For example, a biologist, a psychologist, and a theologian may have various understandings of the "same" phenomenon because they each view the object from a different language world.[49] In this sense of vocation, being a lawyer, for example, implies the acquisition of a "legal imagination."[50]

If we stay with this dimension of the meaning of vocation, then language does become problematic, unless we include the audience in the act of speech construction. Since there are a plurality of audiences, and therefore of language-worlds, which the speaker may draw upon besides his own language world, it is possible at least to expand one's language possibilities, and therefore to "observe" things which would not be possible for an "individual," but become possible for an individual-in-community. It is precisely through the means of debate and dialogue that our grasp of things can be changed and transformed.

However, a better answer to this problem of the limits of language is to explore another dimension of the meaning of

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[49]A good illustration of the kind of problem involved in interdisciplinary discussion can be seen in Owen Barfield's Worlds Apart (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1953).

[50]James White, The Legal Imagination: Studies in the Nature of Legal Thought and Expression (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1973).

vocation. Vocation literally means "calling" (klesis or vocatio), and this meaning implies a movement or we could say a "call" from some place to another place. So when we think of our vocation, we think of where we will go and where we have been. The German language is helpful in seeing the significance of vocation, since in German vocation is one's Beruf, or one's call. Furthermore, since to be called is to hear, vocation is an answer to being called. Hören, hearing in German, is the root of the word for belonging, Gehören, so we see that our vocation is a belonging to what we have heard. So when the speaker enters a "situation," and hears the call from the situation (the questioning or exigence of the situation), then vocation "belongs" to the situation, and the speaker, to the extent that he or she discovers a vocation in that particular situation, finds himself or herself "belonging to" the situation's vocation. In other words, the situation itself is vocational. The whole dynamic of calling-hearing-belonging means that it is time for the situation "to get on." How it gets on will in part depend upon the language-world which is constituted through the co-constituents of the speech: the audience(s), the speaker, and the subject matter. In other words, in the beginning, everyone in the situation proceeds as listeners, and their listening to the "situation" and to each other constitutes the possibility for the formation of speech. The speaker, as listener and speaker, experiences the otherness of the audience in his or her own speech, as he or she becomes "other" to himself or herself.

"To the extent that what I say has meaning, I am a different 'other' for myself when I am speaking; and to the extent that I understand, I no longer know who is speaking and who is listening."[51]

At the same time, the speaker must assume another "vocation," namely that of speaker. One way to explain this is to examine the proper pronouns for speaker and audience. The speaker must be understood not only from the audience's perspective as a third person, "he," "she," or "it," but also as a person addressing them, that is as a "you." So the audience may respond: "You said this?" This speaker, in the course of speaking, becomes in the eyes of the audience a second person singular "You."

At the same time, in the context of speaking, the speaker changes his relationship to himself or herself. Instead of the first person "I" the speaker takes on the role of speaker and becomes a "You" for himself or herself. In other words, the speaker becomes a "public self." In the rhetorical situation, it is not the private "I" that appears, but rather the public "You" as the speaker who is recognized by the listeners and by himself or herself as a public person.

The speaker's perspective of the audience also can be elucidated in terms of pronouns. The common view of "audience" is that it is a third person "they." However, in discourse, the audience could more adequately be seen as a second person

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[51]Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Signs, trans. Richard McCleary (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1964), p. 97.

plural "you." Instead of the "I-Thou" relationship, which has become the popular phrase for discourse, the rhetorical perspective would suggest, it seems to me, a "You (singular)-You (plural) relationship. This model would guard against the privatization of the speaker and at the same time overcome the objectification of the audience into an impersonal "they." It allows the situation to be recognized as one of co-listeners and co-speakers, and the responsive character of the situation is thereby affirmed.

These various meanings of "vocation" should allow us to recognize the merit of Burke's observation without unduly slipping into limitations which occur when the speaker is isolated from audiences. Of course, the inclusion of an audience does not always mean that the most adequate speech will be presented. In Perelman's discussion of this issue, he gave the following quote from Demosthenes:

> Your orators never make you either bad man or good, but you make them whichever you choose; for it is not you that aim at what they wish for, but they who aim at whatever they think you desire. You therefore must start with a noble ambition and all will be well, for then no orator will give you base counsel, or else he will gain nothing by it, having no one to take him at his word.[52]

Demosthenes really reminds us that viewing discourse from a rhetorical perspective does not eliminate the problems of finding what to say that needs to be said. Rather it changes the locus for such activity. It is in the relationships between speaker-audience and subject matter, as they

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[52]Perelman, p. 24.

come to be in a vocational and linguistic context. The process of speech performance is finally dependent upon the possibilities of these situations. Language is the medium through which the process of speaking occurs, and only if language is recognized as fundamentally embedded in situations, as belonging to human attachments and human labor, is it possible to give speaking the power which Cicero and other rhetoricians recognized. Of course, there are other uses of language, more idealized and somewhat situationless, but the power of these languages always comes from the continuing communication of everyday life. Speaking is a "public work."

CHAPTER III

RHETORICAL METHOD

Rhetoric, like hermeneutics, is both a theory and a practice, and like hermeneutical theory, rhetorical theory reflects and judges rhetorical practice. In this sense, the theory is a way of seeing how people are persuaded and judging what belongs to the practice of rhetoric and what does not. In the end, the validity of the theory is its adequacy in furthering the practice which it considers, or in other words, practice is the final test.

One place where theory and practice closely interact is the question of method. Early rhetoricians distinguished five parts of rhetoric which together comprised rhetorical method: invention, arrangement, style, delivery, and memory. The first part, invention, was concerned with the process of finding what could be effectively said in particular situations or cases, and for Aristotle, it was the real basis of rhetoric, as an "art." The following discussion will follow Aristotle's lead and focus upon the inventive method and examine rhetorical invention.

The task of invention is the development of "proofs." In Greek, the word for "proof" is derived from the same term as the active verb "to persuade" and the passive verb "to believe." Pistis means all three of these things. In Aris-

totle's Rhetoric William Grimaldi has identified three different uses of the term pistis.

> These meanings are: (1) pistis as a state of mind, i.e., belief or conviction, which results when a person accepts a proof or demonstration; (2) pistis as the logical instrument of the reasoning process in deduction or induction; (3) pistis as source material, material which comes from the logical analysis of the subject, from the study of the character of the speaker or audience, and from the emotional context potentially present for this audience in this subject and situation.[1]

The second and third meanings of pistis are directly concerned with the development of the method of rhetorical invention. The common proofs, that is, pistis as a logical instrument, are the enthymeme and the example, and the key element of these proofs are the general topics. The material proofs (the sources) are probabilities and signs, which are selected through the use of special topics. Understanding these various categories and their relationships will be the task of this chapter.

In the opening paragraphs of the Rhetoric, Aristotle reproaches other rhetoricians for ignoring the enthymeme, which he considers the very substance or body (soma) of rhetoric.

> It is obvious, therefore, that a system arranged according to the rules of art is only concerned with proofs; that proof is a sort of demonstration, since we are most strongly convinced when we suppose anything to have been demonstrated; that rhetorical demonstration is an enthymeme, which, generally speaking, is the strongest of rhetorical proofs; and lastly,

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[1]William M. A. Grimaldi, S.J., "Studies in the Philosophy of Aristotle's Rhetoric," Hermes: Zeitschrift für Klassische Philologie, Heft 25 (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, GMBH, 1972), pp. 58-59.

that the enthymeme is a kind of syllogism.[2]

The enthymeme, as a special kind of syllogism, can be understood by contrasting it with the dialectical syllogism. Richard McKeon summarizes the differences as follows:

> In dialectic the principles of discussion are found in the distinctions between definition, genus, property, and accident; but in rhetoric they are derived from the view of the facts which the speaker can make acceptable to his audience, and the example, enthymeme, and maxim must therefore be considered . . . not on the plausibility of arguments relative to the alternatives presented, but on their plausibility relative to the persons addressed.[3]

By keeping the audience component of the enthymeme in mind, which McKeon has pointed out, we can avoid the common misunderstanding of the enthymeme as simply a truncated or incomplete syllogism. Many of the examples of enthymemes do appear abbreviated; however, as Richard Weaver has cogently said, the "missing premise" is supplied by the audience. It is "in their hearts as it were."[4] The unspoken premises of an enthymeme are not missing, they are embedded in the audience-situation.

Weaver's comment about the "heart" has been further elucidated by a recent study on the etymology of the word enthymeme.[5] Enthymeme is derived from _en_ + _thymos_, and

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[2]Aristotle _Rhetoric_ 1. 1. 2.

[3]Richard McKeon, "Aristotle's Conception of Language, and the Arts of Language," _Classical Philology_ XLL (January 1947):43.

[4]Richard Weaver, _Ethics of Rhetoric_ (Chicago: Henry Regneny Co., Gateway Edition, 1970), p. 175.

[5]Arthur B. Miller and John D. Bee, "Enthymemes: Body and Soul," _Philosophy and Rhetoric_ 5 (Fall 1972):201.

thymos has the meaning of "heart," "soul," or "passion." From this observation, one can argue that "the enthymeme is a matter of heart and feeling, not intellect and demonstration."[6]

Grimaldi, in his thorough study of the enthymeme, essentially agrees with this argument. He argues for an understanding of enthymeme which acknowledges that it is characterized by both reason and emotion.

> We discover that it signifies something that is more than a simple act of the mind, an act grounded only in reason. Its usage appears to implicate an act of the whole person, his emotions and feelings as well as his intellect.[7]

Cyril Welch captured the affective and emotional aspects of the enthymeme in his description of its evocative and inviting performance.

> By leaving moments of the argument unspoken in the heat of the discussion, one paves the way to an acknowledgement of one's own role in the development of meaning. . . . The point of enthymeme is to introduce a commitment to acceptance of one's own performative role, it promotes a transition from an oblivious presumption to a circumspect assumption of basic meanings. In this way the issue of the argument is seen as holding something out for the participants rather than simply being foisted off upon them by means of verbal contrivances.[8]

To "introduce a commitment" on the part of the audience to their "own performative role" in the process of giving shape to the situation is to make the reasoning process communal in a very significant sense. To leave moments of the argument unspoken is to open discourse to the participation of the

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[6]Ibid., p. 201. [7]Grimaldi, p. 81.

[8]Cyril Welch, "Extra-Ordinary Language," Philosophy and Rhetoric 4 (Summer 1971):173.

hearers. It is to risk commitment. Earl Wiley makes the following contrast between dialectic and enthymeme which supports the notion of the enthymematic risk: "Dialectic is the Logic par excellence of the status quo. The master of the enthymeme, meanwhile, raises hope for the future on the hazard of a probability."[9]

In order to see how an enthymeme actually looks, we can turn to the sources of enthymemes, that is the material proofs, which are probabilities and signs.

Aristotle defines a probability as "a thing that generally happens."[10] It is not anything that might conceivably happen, but what usually does happen. Grimaldi calls it a kind of universal with respect to individual possibilities, as one might say it is probable that "parents love their children."[11]

Aristotle defines signs in terms of their relationship to a universal. A sign is infallible and necessary if the relation proceeds from the universal to the particular, as when fever is taken as a sign of illness, or a woman having milk is a sign that she has had a child. A sign which proceeds in the opposite direction, from particular to universal, is fallible and can be refuted. For example, one can argue that fast breathing is a sign of fever, but it may also be due to running or something else.[12]

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[9]Earl Wiley, "Aristotle's Topoi: Patterns of Persuasion," The Ohio Speech Journal 1 (1963):11.

[10]Rhetoric 1. 2. 15. [11]Grimaldi, p. 197.

[12]Rhetoric 1. 2. 18.

The exact identity of signs and probabilities, and their relationship has been a subject of interesting studies in recent years, and because of their importance for enthymemes, we will review some of the different interpretations.

In an early essay in this discussion, James McBurney wrote that the difference between signs and probabilities can be understood as the difference between ratio essendi and ratio congnoscendi propositions.[13] A sign enthymeme gives "the reason for acknowledging the being of a fact," and a probability enthymeme gives "a reason for the being of a fact." The probable has to do with cause and the sign with fact. From the listener's perspective, one could say that probability implies knowledge of something, and a sign acknowledgments. "As Aristotle defines the sign it is simply an indicator that something exists (and so is a reason for knowing), not a reason for the thing's existence."[14]

Grimaldi has questioned this distinction, because some sign enthymemes can easily be converted into probable enthymemes.[15] For example, the sign enthymeme, "Continually speaking about one's accomplishments is a sign of being boastful," can, by rearranging, become, "Those who continually speak of their accomplishments are boastful." So the division by McBurney appears ambiguous. Grimaldi suggests that the dif-

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[13]James McBurney, "The Place of the Enthymeme in Rhetorical Theory," Speech Monographs III (1936):56.

[14]Edward Madden, "The Enthymeme: Crossroads of Logic, Rhetoric, and Metaphysics," Philosophical Review LXI (1952):372.

[15]Grimaldi, p. 136.

ference between signs and probabilities is that signs are relational, they are signs of something, whereas probabilities exist by themselves.[16] However, this also seems inadequate since probabilities must relate to something in order to present an argument.

Nancy Harper has offered another interpretation by suggesting that the "and" in the statement that the materials of enthythemes are signs and probabilities means both rather than either one or the other.[17] After an analysis of the enthymematic examples in Aristotle's Rhetoric, she concluded that signs and probabilities together constitute enthymemes, and that they are best understood as "observations" and "generalizations." For example, "Socrates is feverish" is an observation (sign) which is then related to the generalization, "feverish people are sick," which results in the inference that "Socrates is sick."[18] Enthymemes therefore have the following pattern:

> Because of the semeion (sign)
> and Because of the eidos (probability)
> therefore the enthymema (inference)[19]

If Harper is correct, then the function of enthymematic rhetoric is to enable acknowledgment of conditions through the inferential reading of signs. Barbara Wood, in an article on the similarity between the methods of rhetoric and medicine,

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[16] Ibid., p. 133.

[17] Nancy Harper, "An Analytical Description of Aristotle's Enthymeme," Central States Speech Journal 4 (Winter 1973):307.

[18] Ibid., p. 305.

[19] Ibid., p. 308.

would seem to support this interpretation.[20] Wood suggests that in the Classical period both rhetoric and medicine had the same problem of being without a scientific method, and that medicine, through the work of Hippocrates, developed the method of conjecture to answer this criticism. She defines the method as follows:

> The method is based upon observation of certain signs which in past experience have regularly accompanied other phenomena which we may say they signify. Such inferences are not infallible, but if based upon sufficiently broad empirical observations, they will be highly probable. With this knowledge, the physician can make inferences, and treatment can be prescribed accordingly.[21]

Wood further suggests that rhetoric borrowed this method from medicine, and as she points out, there are many references to medicine in rhetorical texts. However that may be, the conjectural method, which would imply the union of probabilities and signs, does help us to identify a specific method of invention.

However, it is difficult to maintain the limited definition of enthymeme that Harper advocates. For example, she believes that the inference or conjecture of the enthymeme is always particular. So the one example that Aristotle gives which does not have a particular inference she dismisses as a true enthymeme.[22] This raises the question whether or not enthymemes can end in generalizations.

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[20] Barbara Wood, "The Conjectural Method: From Ancient Medicine to Ancient Rhetorical Theory," Western Speech (Winter 1967):37.

[21] Ibid., p. 40. [22] Harper, p. 306.

The best way to answer the question is to look at Aristotle's treatment of maxims. He defines a maxim as either the premise or conclusion of an enthymeme, without the syllogism. "Add the reason or explanation, and the whole thing is an enthymeme."[23] If maxims can be conclusions of enthymemes, then, since they always concern general things, enthymemes can end in generalizations.

In fact, in Roman rhetoric, the enthymeme became known as something like a maxim. Cicero defines the enthymeme as a method of "drawing a conclusion from contradictory statements" (ex repugnantibus sententiis communis conclusio).[24]

The problem is that the enthymeme has been employed in a variety of ways, and it is probably impossible to include all uses in any effective definition. This would seem to suggest the possibility of a loose and a strict understanding of enthymeme. For a loose enthymeme, we can follow Bower Aly's suggestion that an enthymeme is "the way people think from one point to another."[25] For a strict interpretation, however, it seems to me that Harper's analysis provides the usable model for enthymematic reasoning. An enthymeme is an inference drawn from a sign in terms of the probable.

Besides the enthymeme, the other common proof is the example (paradeigma). The example, in contrast to the deduc-

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[23] Rhetoric. 2. 21. 2.

[24] Cicero Topica, Loeb Classical Library, vol. 2 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), 13. 56.

[25] Bower Aly, "Enthymemes: The Story of a Lighthearted Search," Speech Teacher IXV (November 1965):266.

tive form of the enthymematic syllogism, is a form of induction. It moves from particular to particular rather than from either particular to general or from general to particular.[26] Aristotle writes that the example is more suitable for deliberative rhetoric, because past actions may serve as paradigms for future actions, whereas the enthymeme is more suitable for forensic rhetoric, since judgments about what did or did not happen more easily submit themselves to deductive reasoning.[27]

Besides actual past experiences, examples may be created by the speaker. Such examples include the "illustrative parallel" (parabole) and the fable (logos). Aristotle quotes Socrates as an illustration of the former:

> Public officials ought not to be selected by lot. This is like using the lot to select athletes, instead of choosing those who are fit for the context; or using the lot to select a steersman from among a ship's crew, as if we ought to take the man on whom a lot falls, and not the man who knows most about it.[28]

In this illustration, we can recognize how the example can function both as a common proof beside the enthymeme and also as a source for enthymemes. As an inductive proof, the athlete and the steersman are paradigmatic for the selection of leaders. However, to the extent that one accepts this proof, he lends to the argument an implied connection between the various particulars. This connection may then serve as a generalization or probability for the construction of an enthymematic deductive argument.

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[26] Rhetoric 1. 2. 19. [27] Ibid., 1. 9. 40.

[28] Ibid., 2. 20. 4.

What allows an inductive example to be potentially enthymematic is the perception of the common link between various instances or particulars. This power or ability to intuit such universals contains much of the power of rhetoric. It is possible to place a variety of terms under the rubric of argument by example because they all arise from the same intuitive process, with varying degrees of force.

Such terms as comparison, illustration, analogy, simile, parable, paradigm, model, and metaphor, all refer to the act of establishing relationships between things, events, and words, in terms of similarities and differences. If we could place them on a continuum, with the simple comparison on one end, and the metaphor on the other, and see the continuum move from a strong emphasis upon the similarity between the terms with a corresponding weak emphasis upon the difference to a weak emphasis upon the similarity, and a corresponding strong emphasis upon the difference, then it would be possible to see the breadth of arguments by example.

comparison——————————————————metaphor

(strong similarity weak difference) (weak similarity strong difference)

The advantage of this approach to the field of terms which bring particulars together is that we see their rhetorical value, which is that the audience must supply the generalization which holds the terms together. This is as true of the metaphor as of the comparison. On the other hand, the metaphor is a more forceful argument because of the increased tension which the strong differences between the terms create.

Aristotle recognizes this aspect of metaphor when he likens them to riddles.[29] Like riddles, metaphors draw in the listener to supply the conclusion, and thereby to make it his own. As with the enthymeme, the metaphor opens the discourse for the inclusion of the audience.

Unfortunately, the rhetorical use of metaphor has been misunderstood by many recent writers on metaphor, resulting in a contrast between the "sterility" of the rhetorical metaphor and the "creativity" of poetic metaphors.[30]

There seem to be several reasons for this misunderstanding. First of all, except for rhetoricians, few scholars are aware of the significance of the enthymeme in Aristotle's theory and how it serves as a background for his whole rhetorical method. Secondly, Aristotle discusses the metaphor in Book III, which is on style, and the relationship between style and thought is unclear in Aristotle's work. However, Aristotle has made statements on the metaphor in both the Rhetoric and Poetics, and in these statements one finds a consistent view of the real function of the metaphor and how it comes to be. In the Poetics he writes: "It [metaphor] is the one thing that cannot be learnt from others, and it is also a sign of genius, since a good metaphor implies an intuitive perception of the similarity of dissimilars."[31] Or one can read a similar statement from the Rhetoric: "It is metaphor about all that gives per-

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[29] Ibid., 3. 2. 12.

[30] E.g., see Paul Ricoeur, Interpretation Theory (Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1976), pp. 46-53.

[31] Poetics, 22. 1459a. 5.

spicuity, pleasure, and a foreign air, and it cannot be learnt from anyone else."[32] When Ricoeur writes that the rhetorical view of metaphor "does not involve any new information and that therefore its function is purely decorative," he has failed to take these statements into account. It seems to me that metaphors, like the strict enthymeme, bring about the recognition or the acknowledgment of what is. Also like enthymemes, they require the audience for their completion.

The decisive difference between the simple comparison and the metaphor is that the creation of metaphors cannot be subjected to a "method," as can comparisons. As Aristotle says, they cannot be learned from anyone else, but are the result of intuition. However, this should not diminish the rhetorical effect of metaphors, since the audience's involvement determines their effectiveness. In fact, metaphors can remind us that Aristotle defines rhetoric not as a method, but as a "power" or "faculty" of perception. The distance between such a definition and metaphors does not appear to be very great.[33]

The metaphor belongs to the larger category of rhetorical figures or tropes, and although they have been considered as mere ornaments, contemporary rhetoric has begun to examine their role in discovery. Sloane puts it this way:

> Above all, a modern rhetorician would insist that the figures, like all elements of rhetoric, reflect and determine not only the conceptualizing processes of the speaker's mind but also an audience's potential response. For all these reasons figures of speech

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[32] Rhetoric 3. 2. 9. [33] Ibid., 1. 2.

> are crucial means of examining the transactional nature of discourse.[34]

In part III, the tropes will be further explored. Now we will turn to the means for selecting the materials for inventing persuasive speeches.

The sources for both enthymematic and exemplary arguments are the modes of persuasion, which include the disposition of the audience, the speaker's public character, and the logic of the subject matter. They are the "materials" from which one selects arguments. The means of selection are the rhetorical topics, which consist of two different types: material and formal. One distinction between them is similar to the distinction Perelman makes between particular and univeral audiences: "By specific topics, I mean the propositions peculiar to each class of things, by universal those common to all alike."[35] However, this distinction does not really reveal the significance of the difference between the two kinds of topics. The particular or specific topics have to do with the subject-matter of enthymemes while the formal topics have to do with relations. Kenneth Burke has said that the search for topics is "a survey of the things that people generally consider persuasive and of methods that have persuasive effects."[36] His distinction between "things" and "methods" parallels the distinction between specific and universal topics.

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[34]Sloane, p. 799. [35]Rhetoric 1. 2. 2.

[36]Burke, Rhetoric of Motives, p. 56.

Topical research in literary criticism which has followed the work of Ernst Curtius has generally failed to make this distinction between specific and universal topics, and, as has been recently pointed out, his work has little resemblance to the Classical notion of topics.[37] At the same time, "topics," also called commonplaces, lines of argument, and "places," have been variously defined in the history of rhetoric. "The commonplaces of invention changed periodically from meaning devices for discovering something previously unknown to meaning familiar quotations in which something well known and widely esteemed is stated."[38] Because of this somewhat chaotic tradition of topics, we will remain with Aristotle's discussion for the most part.

In Books I and II of the Rhetoric, Aristotle delineates the topics for the three kinds of oratory--deliberative, forensic, and epideictic--as well as for the emotions. He then summarizes this part of his work as follows:

> We know nearly all the general heads of each of the special topics that are useful or necessary; for the propositions relating to each have been selected, so that we have in like manner already established all the topics from which enthymemes may be derived on the subject of good and bad, fair or foul, just or unjust, characters, emotions, and habits.[39]

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[37] Ernst Robert Curtius, European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages, trans. Willard Trask (New York: Harper & Row, 1953), pp. 70f. For a critique of Curtius's position, see Edgar Mertner, "Topos und Commonplace," in Strene Anglica, Festschrift für Otto Ritter, herausgegeben von Gerhard Dietrich & Fritz Schulze, Max Niemeyer Verlag, Halle (Saale), 1956, pp. 180f.

[38] Richard McKeon, "Creativity and the Commonplace," p. 201.

[39] Rhetoric 2. 22. 15-16.

These particular or specific topics are the formulations of opinions and values, concerning any specific subject matter. However, as the search for topics begins to move further into any specific subject matter, it tends to lose its rhetorical character and takes on the character of a science. Yet, if one's investigation becomes "scientific" it will no longer be grounded in opinions (doxa) and then lose its possibility of persuasion because it leaves the audience one wishes to persuade. The rhetor must have a practical knowledge, and adequate information on any subject matter about which he or she wishes to speak, "for if you know none of these things, you will have nothing from which to draw a conclusion."[40] However, he or she must not forget that the goal is persuasion, which means that the specific topics must maintain their public, common, and relative character.

The "art" of using topics is not simply repeating lists which others have composed, but rather newly discovering what in fact are the ways in which any subject matter becomes interpreted and articulated. Aristotle criticized the sophist tendency to do the former in the following terms:

> . . . they used to suppose that they trained people by imparting to them not the art but its products, as though anyone professing that he would impart a form of knowledge to obviate pain in the feet, were then not to teach a man the art of shoe-making, or the sources whence he can acquire anything of the kind, but were to present him with several kinds of shoes of all sorts; for he has helped him to meet his need, but has not imparted an art to him.[41]

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[40] Ibid., 2. 22. 5.

[41] Aristotle On Sophistical Refutations 184a. 2-9 (Ross,

What we find in the tradition of topics is that different periods of Western culture have been dominated by different specific topics. Richard McKeon has described some of the major differences as follows:

> Whereas the rhetoric of the Romans took its commonplaces from the practical arts and jurisprudence and the rhetoric of the humanists took its commonplaces from the fine arts and literature, our rhetoric finds its commonplaces in the technology of commercial advertising and of calculating machines.[42]

McKeon's observation suggests a pervasive misuse of the specific topics, namely, their extension beyond their own area to a general category of interpretation, and thereby into areas where they are not appropriate. For example, a "good deal" may be an appropriate topic for discussing the exchange of property but inadequate for the "place" from which one talks about establishing new human relationships. If we remember the distinction between specific and universal topics, then some of these mistakes should become recognizable.

The universal or formal topics are also discovered in the opinions of the audiences, as are the specific topics, but they reflect how the subject matter is structured, or related, rather than subject matter itself.

> They are ways in which the mind naturally and readily reasons, and they are independent, in a way, of the subject to which they are implied, and may be said to be imposed as forms upon this material in order to clarify and determine it further.[43]

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vol. 1), quoted in Richard C. Huseman, "Aristotle's System of Topics," Southern Speech Journal 30 (Spring 1965): 244-55.

[42]McKeon, "Creativity and the Commonplace," p. 207.

[43]Grimaldi, p. 134.

Donovan Ochs has focused upon Aristotle's naming the formal topic an "element" of the enthymeme, and used Aristotle's definition of "element" from the Metaphysics to clarify what Aristotle meant when he calls them "elements" in the Rhetoric.

> An element means the first inherent component out of which a thing is constructed and which cannot be analyzed formally into a different form. . . . By transfer of meaning people call an element whatever, being single and small, has many uses . . . whatever is most general comes to be called an element. . . . What is common, therefore to all the meanings of "element" is that it is primary and inherent.[44]

In order to observe the "element" of an enthymeme, we can examine Aristotle's example of the topic of opposition. The enthymeme is "temperance is good, intemperance is bad." The element which is "primary and inherent" is the relationship of opposition between the pair of terms, good, temperance, and bad, intemperance. The topic is not the complete proposition, but rather the axle, if you will, which connects the "materials" of the enthymeme.

Aristotle lists twenty-eight general topics, which Ochs has called "an amalgam of miscellaneous molds into which rhetorical arguments are usually cast."[45] It does seem impossible to say why these particular twenty-eight are listed, or to know the principle of selection; they are probably best understood as Aristotle's perception of the modes of inference which were persuasive in Athenian culture.

Besides the list of twenty-eight topics, there is an-

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[44]Donovan J. Ochs, "Aristotle's Concept of Formal Topics," Speech Monographs 36 (November 1969):423.

[45]Ibid., p. 425.

other set of general topics in the Rhetoric, which include the "possible and impossible," "past and future action," and "amplification and depreciation." Huseman believes that these are properly understood as "heads" under which a number of general topics fall,[46] but again it is impossible to place all of the general topics in any systematic order, and they are better understood as a multitude of ways in which terms, events, and things may be related.

Richard Weaver has interpreted the formal topics as "points of view" and believes that in the selection of general topics, one assumes a perspective of the world. "The reasoner reveals his philosophical position by the source of argument which appears most often in his major premise because the major premise tells us how he is thinking about the world."[47] As a demonstration of his interpretation, Weaver compared the speeches of Matthew Arnold and Abraham Lincoln. He found that Arnold's arguments from circumstances reveal his liberal politics just as Lincoln's arguments from definition reveal his conservatism.[48]

Although Weaver's notion has value in the rhetorical criticism of speeches, in terms of invention, it tends to overlook the potentially creative aspect of topics. Rhetoric proposes that through the selection of the appropriate topics, whether conservative or liberal, one can make an effective response to a situation. The element of choice, which implies that one may be both conservative and liberal, gives

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[46]Huseman, p. 250. [47]Weaver, p. 55. [48]Ibid., pp. 55-114.

topical research a flexibility which corresponds to the changing circumstances.

For example, during the early years of the Vietnam War, two dominating topics were those of opposition and past actions. The opposition argument held that whatever was good for the Communists was bad for the "free world," and the argument from past actions supported the "domino theory." The first was partially refuted by the topic of incentives and deterrents, which was supported by the increase of an economic exchange between the United States and the Russians. The second also was finally over-shadowed by another topic: what Aristotle called the topic of outward show and inward thoughts, or what was also called American hypocrisy. Of course the topical explanation of the conversations during this time does not relieve the social burden, but it does add a new perspective on the failure of discourse among groups of different persuasions.

One of the most comprehensive topical analyses in recent studies can be found in Perelman's New Rhetoric. Among the some sixty-four different topics which have been identified in his book, one modern topic is the topic of waste. It allows one to reason that since one has gone this far, or invested this much, one should continue or the effort will be wasted.[49] This was also used to justify the continuence of the Vietnam War and is even used to justify finishing graduate studies.

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[49]Perelman, p. 279.

The development of topics for contemporary discourse is a never-ending rhetorical task. Since one's argument will be a means of establishing relations between a this and a that, the ways in which an audience usually makes connections will be an important aspect of audience analysis. The purpose of topical research is to find topics, not only for the development of arguments but also for the refutation of arguments. Cicero makes the following comparison to illustrate the significance of the topics or commonplaces:

> It is easy to find things that are hidden if the hiding place is pointed out and marked; similarly if we wish to track down some argument we ought to know the places or topics: for that is the name given by Aristotle to the "regions" as it were, from which arguments are drawn.[50]

These "regions" or places, are "common" in the double sense of being common subjects and of being common ways in which a culture structures and evaluates its communal life. What is "hidden" in the conversing community of everyday life are the common places from which we develop things to say and understand others.

When one reviews the rhetorical method of invention we have discussed, it is at first unclear how the topics and the earlier "sources" (probabilities and signs) relate to each other. Aristotle himself never spells this out explicitly, so one can assume that his intended audience probably knew much more about the practice of rhetoric than we do. However, the various parts of the method seem to relate in the follow-

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[50] *Topica* 2. 8.

ing manner. The rhetor draws his materials or premises from the specific subject which has become an issue in a given situation, and he draws the method of reasoning, or way of relating the premises, from the formal topics. He may then create either a "loose" enthymeme, which would be simply a way of relating the terms through a proposition, or a strict enthymeme, in which case the formal topic would be the type of relationship between the sign and probability. In either enthymeme, the move from one term to another is accomplished by the "element" of the enthymeme, which, and this is the crux of the whole matter, is given to the proposition by the audience, if it is to be persuasive.

PART II

THE AUDIENCE IN MODERN HERMENEUTICS

Modern hermeneutics, from Friedrich Schleiermacher to the present, has been preoccupied with the question of understanding. Because Schleiermacher raised this question in such an epoch-making manner, he may rightfully be considered the "founder" of modern hermeneutics.[1] He may be considered the founder for a second reason as well. Schleiermacher, a theologian, developed a "philosophical" hermeneutics, which in retrospect we see as having been deeply influenced by theological assumptions.[2] This combination of theological and philosophical assumptions is characteristic of the hermeneutical "tradition" which has pursued Schleiermacher's questions. However, just as it is unlikely that the theological, non-theological, and secularized-Biblical assumptions can be totally separated, so also is it unnecessary. Once one takes up the question of understanding, the best sources are simply those available. So, on the one hand, modern hermeneutics follows Schleiermacher's assertion that Biblical hermeneutics claims no special principles which are not applicable to any

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[1] James Duke, "Schleiermacher: On Hermeneutics," in F. D. E. Schleiermacher, Hermeneutics: The Handwritten Manuscripts, ed. Heinz Kimmerle, trans. James Duke and Jack Forstman (Missoula, Montana: Scholars Press, 1977), p. 15.

[2] Gadamer, Truth and Method, p. 173.

text, and on the other hand, we can also observe how Biblical hermeneutics has facilitated a more adequate general hermeneutics. It seems to me that the combination of philosophical and theological assumptions, in spite of the confusion it has sometimes caused, has been one of the strengths of this "tradition."

In our search for the "audience in modern hermeneutics," we will concentrate upon those aspects of modern hermeneutics that were directly concerned with Biblical hermeneutics or were instrumental in the development of Biblical hermeneutics. The hermeneutical proposals can be divided into successive periods with some accuracy. Schleiermacher and Wilhelm Dilthey represent the first period, concerned first with Schleiermacher's question of understanding and then with Dilthey's extension of the question to the issue of historical consciousness. A second period was a radical investigation of the theological claim of hermeneutics, and of the claims of human existence. Karl Barth, Rudolf Bultmann, and Martin Heidegger were the most influential persons in this period. Following the upheaval caused by their work, the next period was largely dominated by their former students: Ernst Fuchs and Gerhard Ebeling, who became identified with the "new hermeneutic," and Hans-Georg Gadamer, who extended Heidegger's work to a comprehensive interpretation of the hermeneutical tradition. The final period, current hermeneutical reflection, can be well represented by Paul Ricoeur. He has proposed both a contemporary hermeneutics and has returned to the initial questions of Schleiermacher.

As indicated by this roughly drawn picture of different periods, modern hermeneutics, even on the scale presented here, presents a vast and somewhat ominous terrain. However, one thread that runs throughout these works is the question of understanding. Since "understanding" is an act of the hermeneutical audience, whether it be the reader, interpreter, or listener(s), it provides an access to modern hermeneutics which offers the possibility for exploring the notion of audience. The authors listed have offered a number of proposals concerning the character of understanding, which can be summed up as follows:

--understanding as reconstruction (Schleiermacher and Dilthey)

--understanding as acknowledgement (Barth, Bultmann, and Heidegger)

--understanding as hearing (the "new hermeneutic")

--understanding as integration (Gadamer)

--understanding as post-critical participation (Ricoeur)

In the following discussion, we will explore those aspects of their hermeneutical theories which created these perspectives and analyze their adequacy for a comprehensive explanation of human discourse.

CHAPTER I

UNDERSTANDING AS RECONSTRUCTION

The significance of Friedrich Schleiermacher's work in hermeneutics has been discovered twice in modern hermeneutics. First by Wilhelm Dilthey, who used Schleiermacher's later hermeneutical writings and lecture notes in his attempt to develop a methodology of the human studies, and, secondly, by Heinz Kimmerle, who returned to Schleiermacher's early work in hermeneutics, and found confirmation of the post-Heideggerian view that hermeneutics is fundamentally linguistic. Kimmerle wrote the following in the introduction to his new edition of Schleiermacher's hermeneutics:

> The decisive, creative aspect of Schleiermacher's hermeneutics, as expressed in the earlier sketches, especially, is the strict and conscious alignment to the concrete process of living speech. In Manuscript I we read "Language is the only presupposition in hermeneutics, and everything that is to be found, including the other objective and subjective presuppositions, must be discovered in language."[1]

The original insight of the universality of language in understanding and speaking, as Kimmerle shows in his analysis, was later abandoned by Schleiermacher as hermeneutics came under the influence of his development of dialectics, or the

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[1]Heinz Kimmerle, "Foreword to the German Edition," in Hermeneutics: The Handwritten Manuscripts, p. 31. See also H. Kimmerle, "Hermeneutical Theory or Ontological Hermeneutics," in History and Hermeneutic, ed. Robert Funk (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), pp. 107-21.

art of thinking.[2] Through this development, speaking and understanding were separated into an outer and inner process, which had decisive ramifications not only for hermeneutics, but also for rhetoric, and its relationship to hermeneutics.

In his work, The Christian Faith, Schleiermacher describes three different forms of discourse: poetical, rhetorical, and didactic.[3] These descriptions show his view of rhetoric, and help us understand the relationship he drew between rhetoric and hermeneutics, a relationship which for the most part has been unquestioned in modern hermeneutics.

Poetic expressions arise from an inward moment of enthusiasm or inspiration and give a descriptive presentation which the hearer then completes for himself or herself in his or her own way. In contrast to this inward generation of poetic speech, rhetorical speech arises from an outward stimulation which ends in a particular definite result. These two forms of discourse, Schleiermacher claims, belong to every religious community.

> For when anyone finds himself in a state of unusually exalted religious self-consciousness he will feel himself called to poetic description as that which proceeds from his state most directly. And on the other hand, when anyone finds himself particularly challenged by insistent or favourable outward circumstances to attempt an act of preaching, the rhetorical form of expression will be the more natural to him for obtaining from the given circumstances the greatest possible advantage.[4]

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[2]Ibid., p. 35.

[3]Friedrich Schleiermacher, The Christian Faith, vol. 1 (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), P. 79.

[4]Ibid.

This distinction between the "inner" of poetics and the "outer" of rhetoric becomes more accentuated in his later thought, and especially in his hermeneutics.

The third kind of discourse, the didactic, eventually overshadows the other two, and is said to be the most adequate for the existing church. Schleiermacher describes it as follows: "The speaker would bring something to consciousness in his hearers which indeed he assumes to exist in them, but does not suppose would develop of itself in this exact way."[5] This description reminds us of Plato's use of dialogue and of the mid-wifery of Socrates. And indeed it should. During a good part of Schleiermacher's career, he was engaged in a translation of Plato's works, and one of Schleiermacher's own writings, Christmas Eve, was patterned after the Platonic dialogue. The work on Plato's Dialogues was of decisive influence for his conception of hermeneutics and of preaching.[6] As for Plato, so for Schleiermacher, rhetoric became secondary to dialectic or the art of thinking. It was to be employed in the "leading of souls" to truth.[7] In contrast to his earlier thought, where rhetorical speech had a place alongside poetic and didactic, in his later work rhetoric is secondary.

Since rhetoric is the external side of thinking, and

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[5]"Explanations," in Friedrich Schleiermacher, On Religion: Speeches to Its Cultured Despisers, trans. John Oman (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), p. 184.

[6]Martin Redeker, Schleiermacher: Life and Thought, trans. Walter de Gruyter & Co. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1973), pp. 181f.

[7]Ibid., p. 208.

hermeneutics is concerned with the inner thought-process, Schleiermacher calls hermeneutics the "reversal" (Umkehrung) of rhetoric.[8] In other words, hermeneutics is not concerned with understanding speech, but rather with understanding the process of thought moving toward speech. Schleiermacher gives an excellent description of his view of hermeneutics in the following autobiographical account:

> I often make use of hermeneutics in personal conversation when, discontented with the ordinary level of understanding, I wish to explore how my friend has moved from one thought to another or try to trace out the views, judgments, and aspirations which led him to speak about a given subject in just this way and no other.[9]

This attempt to go behind speech to thought, or the process of creating speech, makes Richard Palmer's definition of Schleiermacher's hermeneutics as an "art of hearing," somewhat misleading.[10] At least one should say that Schleiermacher is interested not so much in hearing the speech as "hearing" the process of creating speech.

It seems that another reason for Schleiermacher's move behind speaking is that speaking usually entails a specific subject matter and a particular audience. In order for the development of a "universal" hermeneutics, these "specifics" would have to be overcome. His proposal for confronting this problem was to limit hermeneutics to understanding.

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[8] Hermeneutics: The Handwritten Manuscripts, p. 97.

[9] Ibid., pp. 181-2.

[10] Richard Palmer, Hermeneutics: Interpretation Theory in Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Heidegger, and Gadamer (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1969), p. 86.

If one were to survey the history of hermeneutics, one would find that hermeneutics usually consisted of two or three distinct movements. A widely used work on hermeneutics until the post-Reformation period was St. Augustine's On Christian Doctrine, which stated the following proposal for the interpretation of scriptures: "There are two things necessary to the treatment of the Scriptures: a way of discovering those things to be understood and a way of teaching what we have learned."[11]

These two movements, understanding (subtilitas intelligendi) and explaining (subtilitas explicandi), comprised the work of interpretation, which obviously includes an "audience" for whom one interpreted. Later, pietistic hermeneutics in the eighteenth century incorporated a third phase, application (subtilitas applicandi), which made even more explicit that the work of hermeneutics was concerned with letting others know what the text said, what it meant, and what it meant for them.[12] Schleiermacher's predecessor, J. A. Ernesti, wrote the following definition of hermeneutics: "Hermeneutics is the science which teaches to find in an accurate and judicious manner, the meaning of an author, and appropriately to explain it to others."[13] In contrast to this tradition, Schleiermacher limited hermeneutics to "understanding." Explanation, he said,

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[11]Augustine, On Christian Doctrine, trans. D. W. Robertson, Jr. (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1968), p. 5.

[12]Gadamer, Truth and Method, p. 274.

[13]J. A. Ernesti, Elementary Principles of Interpretation, trans. Moses Stuart (New York: Allen, Morrill & Wardweel, 1842), p. 17.

was another production, and therefore like texts, could be the object of hermeneutics, but was not part of hermeneutics.

> As soon as explication becomes more than the outside of understanding, it becomes the art of presentation. Only what Ernesti calls the subtilitas intelligendi genuinely belongs to hermeneutics.[14]

The result of this limitation was that the "audience" which was always implied in earlier hermeneutics was excluded from the proper scope of hermeneutical reflection. Presumably, it would eventually become the recipient of the practice of hermeneutics, but it was no longer a part of that practice.

This "freedom" from any audience, and from any audience-situation allowed Schleiermacher to develop a hermeneutics "universal" in scope. So on the one hand, we see a narrowing, to the phenomenon of understanding alone, but on the other hand, a widening, to the phenomenon of understanding itself, instead of the understanding of this or that. Wilhelm Dilthey, Schleiermacher's biographer, gave the following description of Schleiermacher's reformulation of the task of hermeneutics:

> Until then hermeneutics had been at best a system of rules whose parts, the individual rules themselves were held together by the aim of giving an interpretation of general validity. . . . Hermeneutics had been able to distinguish the various functions--gramatical, historical, esthetico-rhetorical, and material--which worked together in the interpretative act. . . . Schleiermacher now sought for an analysis of the understanding that lay behind these rules, or in other words, a formulation of the goal of the activity as a whole, and from such a formulation he derived the possibility of valid interpretation in general, along with its conceptual instruments, limits, and rules.[15]

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[14] Hermeneutics: The Handwritten Manuscripts, p. 41.

[15] Wilhelm Dilthey, "The Rise of Hermeneutics," New

In this conception of hermeneutics, the only "audience" is the individual listener, either of another in dialogue or of a text. "Artistic interpretation has the same aim as we do in ordinary listening."[16] So, when we focus upon the process of listening, we have taken a perspective similar to Schleiermacher's, and his hermeneutics of the "art of undersanding" can be seen as an elucidation of that process.

In order to draw out the implications of Schleiermacher's notion of the listener or reader in his hermeneutics, we will ask two questions: "What can the reader do in order to understand a text?" and, based upon our answer to this question, "What assumptions must be accepted in order for understanding to occur, according to Schleiermacher?"

What is the reader or listener to do? First of all, if the listener is to practice the art of understanding in the strict sense, then he or she must accept that misunderstanding is the normal course of events. Understanding must be willed and sought.[17] Misunderstanding is "normal" because the reader does not recognize at first the difference between himself or herself and the author, in terms of their use of language and their ways of formulating thought. In contrast to a hermeneutic which might attempt to prevent misunderstanding, which Schleiermacher labels a "loose" and artless practice, the strict practice of hermeneutics acknowledges the

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Literary History III, trans. Fredric Jameson (Winter 1972), p. 240.

[16] Hermeneutics: The Handwritten Manuscripts, p. 109.

[17] Ibid., p. 110.

fact of misunderstanding as the occasion for a conscious and deliberate practice of understanding.

After acknowledging this situation, the task of the reader is to approach the utterance of the author through an analysis of the "wholes" to which the utterance belongs. The approach involves two different and yet related perspectives: the grammatical and the psychological.

The grammatical looks at the speech as part of the whole of language in which it occurred. The meaning of words are derived from the language context. Schleiermacher formulated two Canons for this aspect of his hermeneutics: I. Everything requiring yet further definition in a given discourse can be determined only from the language-domain common to the writer and his original public, and II. The sense of any word in a given passage must be determined by its association with those surrounding it.[18] Both of these canons are based upon the principle of parts and whole, which can be called the hermeneutical principle.

This principle, also known as the "hermeneutical circle," indicates the "circular" process of understanding parts and whole. Simply stated, the principle says that we understand the parts only from knowing the whole and we know the whole only from the relations among the parts. It is awareness of the "wholes" which helps to overcome misunderstanding, since misunderstanding arises from the false assumption that the author's total context, or "whole" is the same as the reader's.

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[18] Ibid., pp. 117f and 127.

The second direction, the psychological, also has the character of the hermeneutical circle, only instead of focusing upon language, it moves toward the author. In this case, the "whole" is the totality of the author as an existing person, who out of this totality says the particular thing stated in the text. The psychological approach is further divided into two dimensions: the divinatory and the comparative. Schleiermacher gives the following description of these two:

> The "divinatory" is that which tries to grasp what is individual in an "immediate" way, in the sense that one as it were changes himself into the other. The "comparative" begins by positing that which is to be understood as something general, in the sense that it compares it with others dealt with under the same general [category].[19]

The consummation of Schleiermacher's hermeneutic is the "divinatory" act of the interpreter who "as it were changes himself into the other." This act, a "reconstruction of the author's construction," is an active understanding of the creativity or "genius" of the author.[20]

Reviewing the pattern we have described, Schleiermacher's hermeneutic of "hearing" entails the following steps: first of all, an awareness that one does not understand and that understanding must be sought. Secondly, a move through the dialectic of parts and whole of the author's linguistic and human world, and finally, a reconstruction of the creative process performed by the author. The reconstruction is the realization of understanding.

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[19]Ibid., p. 150.

[20]Ibid., p. 192.

What kind of assumptions must be accepted in order that this process succeeds? The fundamental assumption is that the reader is capable of performing the reconstruction of the original construction of the author. In order for this to happen, given the differences and distances that the reader experiences in the strict practice of understanding, there must be a mutual basis for contemporaneity. Schleiermacher's hermeneutic has such an assumption which Richard Niebuhr has described as follows:

> Speaking and interpreting presuppose participation in a common humanity but at the same time they give a new concreteness to that which is distinctively human in our experience of others and of ourselves. . . . This is the basic conviction that informs the whole of the development of his thinking on interpretation.[21]

Schleiermacher puts it this way:

> [Divination] rests upon the fact that every person besides being peculiar possesses a receptiveness for all other persons, and this seems to be based only on the fact that each person carries a minimum of every other person within himself, and the divination is thus aroused (aufgeregt) by comparison with one's self.

This identity between reader and author can be called the fundamental assumption of Schleiermacher's implicit notion of audience, and is absolutely necessary for his hermeneutic to succeed.

A second assumption is that the ultimate "meaning" of a text resides in the author's creative performance. Not simply what the author said, or meant, but the author as

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[21] Richard Niebuhr, Schleiermacher on Christ and Religion (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1964), p. 80.

[22] Hermeneutics: The Handwritten Manuscripts, p. 150.

"genius" or creator is the focus for understanding. This assumption as to what is the object of hermeneutics has been rejected by twentieth century hermeneutics and represents the weakest aspect of Schleiermacher's proposal.

A third assumption is the assumed superiority of the reader or interpreter over the author. The superiority takes the form of the interpreter's assumed freedom from his own situation in comparison to the author's historical placement. Schleiermacher accepted many of the results of historical criticism of his day, and believed that historical interpretation was necessary "to do justice to the rootedness of the New Testament authors in their time and place."[23] However, even though the author was to be understood in his "place," the same was not true of the reader. The reader's freedom from his own historical position not only allowed him or her to "change" into the author, as it were, but also to "understand the speech as well as and even better than its author."[24] One can understand better than the author because he or she can become aware of the "wholes" to which the author's utterance belongs, which would not have been explicitly available to the author.

The assumption of superiority by the modern interpreter presents a serious hermeneutical problem. It has been severely criticized in various hermeneutical and theological reflections following Schleiermacher. Dilthey brought it into question by acknowledging the historic character of the

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[23]Ibid., p. 104. [24]Ibid., p. 112. See also p. 118.

reader or interpreter. Whereas for Schleiermacher, the present day interpreter was not considered limited by his or her own language and vision in the same way that the author of texts were, for Dilthey, both the author and the interpreter must be seen within an historical context. Karl Barth also brought Schleiermacher's assumption into question but from an opposite direction. He asserted the superiority of the Biblical witness over the conceptuality and vision of the modern period. However, even though one may protest against the assumption of superiority, it remains such a part of our very modernness, that it seems impossible to totally overcome.

The source of our assumed superiority in relation to the past lies in the eighteenth century and was aptly expressed in the phrase, "querelle des anciens et des modernes." Until this battle was won by the moderns, ancient texts were read with the assumption that they were superior to modern thought. This assumption was then reversed, and texts, including the Bible as well as the "classics," were read critically. The "moderns" decided what the value of these texts for the present would be, where they were inadequate, and where they were immoral, irrelevant, and simply superstitious. The present became the criterion for the past, rather than the other way around.[25]

Even though these various assumptions have been challenged and sometimes reversed in post-Schleiermachean herme-

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[25]See Gadamer, Truth and Method, pp. 156f, for a discussion of the relation between "moderns" and Schleiermacher's hermeneutic.

neutics, they have also continued to set the direction for later theories. Other aspects of Schleiermacher's hermeneutics, such as his Platonic interpretation of rhetoric and dialectic, the exclusion of application, the individualistic character of understanding, and the dialogical model for speech, have also been repeated in later hermeneutics. Most of these assumptions went unchallenged by Wilhelm Dilthey, but he did radially change the shape of hermeneutics through his conception of the historical character of understanding.

If Schleiermacher is the founder of modern hermeneutics in the sense that his project of a general hermeneutics brought about a new focus upon the phenomenon of understanding, Dilthey must be considered the one who shaped the major hermeneutical problematic: namely, the relationship between hermeneutics and history. One can understand Dilthey's work by viewing it as an attempt to overcome the potential dangers in the rise of historical consciousness on the one hand, and the spread of the then reductionistic methods of the natural sciences on the other. Both of these movements were addressed in Dilthey's question: "How is objective historical understanding possible?"[26] The question was answered through a "Critique of historical Reason,"[27] which involved the application of a hermeneutical model of "research" to the human

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[26]Rudolf A. Makkreel, Dilthey: Philosopher of the Human Studies (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), p. 8.

[27]Wilhelm Dilthey, Pattern and Meaning in History: Thoughts on History and Society, ed. H. P. Rickman (New York: Harper & Row, Harper Torchbooks, 1962), p. 67. This translation is from vol. 7 of Gesammelte Schriften.

sciences and especially to the study of history.

In order to counter historical skepticism and mechanistic reductionism, it was necessary to develop a methodology which would be "objective" and yet able to grasp the human or "living" quality of human history. The key to meeting these demands was the recognition of the historical being of the "researcher."

> Thus, to impenetrable depths within myself, I am a historical being. The fact that the investigator of history is the same as the one who makes it, is the first condition which makes scientific history possible; here we have the first significant element for the solution of the epistemological problem of history.[28]

What does it mean to be an historical being? Dilthey sought to explicate historicity by approaching it through the notion of "objectifications of life."

> Only through the idea of the objectification of life do we gain insight into the nature of the historical. . . . From the distribution of trees in a park, the arrangement of houses in a street, the functional tool of an artisan, to the sentence pronounced in the courtroom, we are hourly surrounded by the products of history. As time marches on we are surrounded by Roman ruins, cathedrals and the summer castles of autocrats. History is not something separated from life or divided from the present by distance in time.[29]

In other words, since the social-world in which we live is constituted by the objectifications of life, the historical being is intimately social. At the same time, the individual remains the one who bears the task of comprehending the historical, which depends upon his or her own self-understanding. "The power and breadth of our own lives and the energy with

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[28]Ibid., p. 67. [29]Ibid., p. 124.

which we reflect on them are the foundation of historical vision."[30]

In order to see how the historicality of the historian functions in the study of history, we can look briefly at the hermeneutical process which Dilthey envisioned.

Hermeneutic, Dilthey writes, is the "orderly and systematic understanding of fixed and relatively permanent expressions of life."[31] At the basis of this view of hermeneutics is the relationship between life, expression, and understanding (Erleben, Ausdruck, Verstehen). Expressions of life (Lebensäusserungen) are understandable because it is life which understands them. However, understanding, for Dilthey, is never separated from life-expressions. Dilthey puts it this way:

> Briefly, it is through the process of understanding that life gains illumination about its depths and yet we understand ourselves and others only by putting what we have actually experienced into every kind of expression of our own and other's lives. So, mankind becomes the subject matter of the human sciences only because the relation between experience, expression, and understanding exists.[32]

Although it may be tempting to collapse Dilthey's project into the process of "understanding life," this must not be allowed to happen. Life (Leben) is only understood in its expressions and through its objectifications. A text is such an objectification, as are other documents, monuments, institutions, and even language itself. These are available for

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[30] Ibid., p. 87.

[31] Dilthey, "The Rise of Hermeneutics," p. 232.

[32] Dilthey, Pattern and Meaning in History, p. 71. See Makkreel, p. 243.

a plurality of investigations, from such viewpoints as those of economics, psychology, religions, etc. However, individual-social expressions, in the human sciences, must not be explained through positing causal relations, as is done in the natural sciences, but are to be understood.

Instead of knowledge and explanation, which describe the natural sciences, understanding and interpretation become the identifying marks of the human sciences. The interpretation of the objectifications of life brings into play the hermeneutical principle of parts and whole.

> We explain by means of purely intellectual processes, but we understand by means of the combined activity of all the mental powers in apprehension. And, in understanding, we proceed from the system of the whole, which is given to us in living experience, to make the particular intelligible to ourselves in terms of it.[33]

Through interpretation, the isolated expression is seen in its relatedness to other expressions and to the movement of history itself. These structures in their unity expose the experience of life (Erlebnis) which they express. "The task of all history is to grasp the systems of interactions."[34] This grasping is understanding.

Understanding, as the act of the historian, has the following characteristics in Dilthey. First of all, it functions within the dynamic of parts and whole, the hermeneutical circle, and this dynamic has both synchronic and diachronic aspects, to use the language of modern linguistics. Secondly, understanding the inter-connections of systems of

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[33]Ibid., p. 93. [34]Ibid., p. 89.

the past is dependent upon one's understanding of the present.

> The comprehension of the system of interactions of history grows first of all from individual points at which remnants of the parts belonging together are linked in understanding by their relation to experience; which is near and around us becomes a means of understanding what is distant and past.[35]

Thirdly, understanding is the grasping of the "meaning" which is in the system of relations between parts and the whole. Fourthly, the understanding of meaning entails a reconstruction. Similar to Schleiermacher's notion of reconstruction, Dilthey sees the one who understands repeating in himself the construction of the author.[36] However, the difference from Schleiermacher should not be overlooked. Dilthey's view of the individual, whether of author or reader, has a strong historical dimension, which includes a social-political aspect. The final character of understanding is that it is always incomplete, due to its temporality. History continually moves understanding into the future for new experiences, expressions, and understandings.

There are many other aspects of Dilthey's work which are beyond the scope of this paper. Some of his work remained incomplete, and exactly how one should interpret the late developments and final position is difficult to say. In many ways, he is a transitional figure, especially in hermeneutics, from the proposals of Schleiermacher to the work of such writers as Heidegger and Bultmann. He does present a more socio-historical picture of the interpreter than many other

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[35]Ibid., pp. 139-40. [36]Ibid., pp. 242-3.

writers, and especially the "social" dimensions have not received adequate treatment in evaluations of his thoughts on hermeneutics. His most significant contribution to date has been his discovery of the temporal and historical character of understanding. Palmer formulates Dilthey's position as follows: "Experience is intrinsically temporal (and this means historical in the deepest sense of the word) and therefore understanding of experience must also be in commensurately temporal (historical) categories of thought."[37] Dilthey did suggest a set of categories for the study of the human sciences. They included the terms: meaning, value, purpose, formation, inner and outer, development, power, and part and whole.[38] We cannot explore the question of their adequacy now, but the question they address is significant. What is the proper language for speaking about human life? If language and understanding are interdependent, then our selection of categories will significantly influence our understanding.

In Dilthey's work, hermeneutics became a servant of the human sciences and hermeneutics was significantly changed by his perspective of the historicality of the interpreter. However, the next move in hermeneutical theory did not come directly from Schleiermacher's and Dilthey's proposals, but rather arose from the theologians' problematic of how to interpret the Bible so that its voice could be heard. However, the insights of Dilthey concerning the historical character

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[37]Palmer, p. 111.

[38]Dilthey, Pattern and Meaning in History, pp. 96-7.

of the interpreter could not be ignored for long, and, especially in Bultmann, it reappears and has remained a fundamental aspect of hermeneutics until the recent work of Ricoeur. As we will attempt to show, a return to Dilthey's insights at this point is not a return to past hermeneutics but to the hermeneutics of the future.

CHAPTER II

UNDERSTANDING AS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Although Schleiermacher and Dilthey are seen today as the founders of modern hermeneutics, it was not their work which brought hermeneutics from the periphery to the center of philosophical and theological thought. In fact, before the writings of Barth, Bultmann, and Heidegger, hermeneutics, as a reflection about the principles of interpretation and understanding of texts, had been almost completely eclipsed in theological studies by the technical "research" of Biblical criticism and the non-Biblical preaching of liberalism.[1] Two different works filled the vacuum created by the situation: the Biblical hermeneutics of Karl Barth, and the phenomenological hermeneutics of Martin Heidegger. Although neither author wrote a "hermeneutics," both of them raised the issue of understanding and interpretation in a new and urgent manner. However, it was Rudolf Bultmann who took up the hermeneutical question most directly, and within the "tradition" of Schleiermacher and Dilthey, re-formulated the hermeneutical project. We will begin our discussion of this period with Karl Barth, who, with the publication of his Romans in 1918, demonstrated

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[1]James M. Robinson, "Hermeneutic Since Barth," in The New Hermeneutic: New Frontiers in Theology II, ed. James Robinson and John Cobb, Jr. (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), pp. 16-17.

that hermeneutics must be attended to with care.

Karl Barth

The intellectual back-drop for Barth's Romans was formed by competing movements: liberal Protestantism's adaptation of Biblical "truths" to modern thought, and Biblical scholarship's historical and comparative criticism of the Scripture. The practical back-drop was the church's inability to distinguish itself from contemporary culture, especially nationalism, and therefore its powerlessness to create any critical stance toward contemporary events. Faced with the dilemmas created by such a situation, Barth, who was then a pastor in Safenweill, began with his friend, Thurneysen, to read the Bible "a little differently."[2] Romans was the result of this "reading" and in its Preface the challenge to both "modern" thought and scientific textual criticism appears.

> Paul as a child of his age, addresses his contemporaries. It is however, far more important that, as Prophet and Apostle of the Kingdom of God, he veritably speaks to all men of every age. The differences between then and now, there and here, no doubt require careful investigation and consideration. But the purpose of such investigation can only be to demonstrate that these differences are, in fact, purely trivial.[3]

The reason for the triviality of these differences, according to Barth, is that our problems and Paul's problems are the same. "If we rightly understand ourselves, our problems are the problems of Paul; and if we be enlightened by the brightness

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[2]T. H. L. Parker, Karl Barth (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 1970), p. 20.

[3]Karl Barth, The Epistle to the Romans, trans. Edwyn C. Hoskyns (London: Oxford University Press, 1950), p. 1.

of his answers, those answers must be ours."[4] It is important that we not be misled here by interpreting Barth through Schleiermacher. Whereas for Schleiermacher, the reader focused upon the author, and the author's productiveness, Barth's focus is upon the subject matter: what Paul is talking about. Paul is a "witness" of and for something and it is this something that is the subject of the text.

In rhetorical terms, with Barth, and also with Bultmann, there occurs a shift from an emphasis upon the ethos of the speaker or writer, to an emphasis upon the logos, that is, what the speech says. This is not to say that Paul, for example, is disregarded, but rather that the commonness between Paul and the reader is not their "common humanity" but rather their common question about a subject of the text.

The relationship between the reader or interpreter and the author can be further clarified through Barth's own description of the process of reading Romans.

> When an investigation is rightly conducted, boulders composed of fortuitous or incidental or merely historical conceptions ought to disappear almost entirely. The Word ought to be exposed in the words. Intelligent comment means that I am driven on till I stand with nothing before me but the enigma of the matter; till I have forgotten that I am not its author; till I know the author so well that I allow him to speak in my name and am able to speak in his name myself.[5]

Here one can use Schleiermacher's hermeneutics to interpret Barth's view of interpretation. In a way similar to Schleiermacher, Barth proposes that the reader take up the voice of the author, and repeat what he said. In contrast to Dilthey,

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[4]Ibid. [5]Ibid., p. 8.

the historical context of the reader does not play a decisive role in this performance. The "enigma of the matter" which confronted Paul and confronts the reader functions as a uniting principle much as Schleiermacher's common humanity.

However, another aspect of Barth's theology, which is really at the heart of his project, is that the "matter" is not at our disposal. The Word of God in the words of Scripture and in the words of the preacher is a Word which shatters all human attempts at understanding. Barth wrote in the Church Dogmatics: "The fact that God's own address becomes an event in the human word of the Bible is, however, God's affair and not ours."[6] The scriptures, as a written text, are not the Word of God, but rather a witness to, or a record of, God's Word. To wait expectantly for God's Word to "happen" is to stand "with nothing before me but the enigma of the matter." The enigma here is the paradox of God's Word speaking in the human words of scripture, which itself is grounded in the paradox of Jesus of Nazareth being God's Word.

One way of understanding Barth's perspective is to recall our discussion about the "modern's" assumptions of superiority. By giving new authority and freedom to the Word of God, the impact of Barth's proposal was to break the spell of this superiority. The scriptures were not to be approached critically, but rather in such a manner that instead of the reader's grasping them they would grasp the reader.

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[6]Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics, I/1, The Doctrine of the Word of God, trans. G. W. Bromiley (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1975), p. 109.

> Instead of our making use of Scripture at every stage, it is Scripture itself that uses us--the usus scripturae in which scriptura is not object, but subject, and hearer and reader is not subject but object.[7]

In other words, the hearer and reader is defined by the text and from the text, instead of the other way around.

Does this mean that every audience is the same for Biblical interpretation? Barth's answer would appear to be a qualified yes, with a nod to historical differences which may be barriers to the extent that they are given importance. Paul Van Buren gave the following evaluation: "Barth seems to conceive of the preacher as a man without dates in history who is seeking to hear just what the biblical texts said of old, and who, having heard, stands up to pass on precisely what he has heard."[8] Although every interpreter, past and present, will have his or her own "philosophy," Barth believes that no one philosophy has any privilege over any other. Whatever the presuppositions, the text can correct and transform any scheme for the possibility of hearing.

> In this respect, too, we cannot trifle with the freedom of the Word of God. In face of it, we cannot know beforehand what the real present is, what are its burning questions, who and what we are, "our generation," "the modern man," etc. In a very real sense this will not appear until the Bible opens up before us to give us correct and infallible information concerning ourselves and our real questions,

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[7]Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics I/2 The Doctrine of the Word of God, trans. G. T. Thomson and Harold Knight (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1963), p. 738.

[8]Paul Van Buren, "Translator's Introduction," in Karl Barth, God Here and Now, trans. Paul Van Buren (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), p. xiv.

concerns, and needs.[9]

This should not be taken to mean that Barth was unaware of the existence of presuppositions, but rather that they played primarily a negative role in understanding. Bultmann, in contrast, held that what presuppositions a reader or listener brought to a text could have either a negative or a positive effect.[10]

A perspective that Bultmann did share with Barth was that hermeneutics should serve the task of preaching. In fact, the "preacher" becomes the main identification of the hermeneut rather than the "exegete" or "scholar." After Barth, until the decline of the "new hermeneutic," the "preacher" remained the center-place of hermeneutical activity. Funk, in his book on and from this hermeneutical movement, writes:

> This is hermeneutic as it is now understood. The hermeneut--the one who practices hermeneutic--is he who, having been addressed by the word of God and having heard, is enabled to speak, interpret, or translate what he has heard into the human vernacular so that its power is transmitted through speech. If the minister is not a hermeneut, he has missed his vocation.[11]

The result of this emphasis upon the preacher is that hermeneutics now can be seen as having two audiences: the reader, and then the people who listen to the "reader" turned "preacher." For the sake of identification, we can call these the single and corporate audiences.

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[9]Barth, Church Dogmatics I/2, p. 738.

[10]Georg Eicholz, "Der Ansatz Karl Barths in der Hermeneutik," in Antwort: Karl Barth zum Siebzigsten Geburtstag (Zollikon/Zürich: Evangelischer Verlag, 1956), p. 65.

[11]Robert Funk, Language, Hermeneutic, and Word of God (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), pp. 13-14.

For Barth, when the reader turns to his congregation, which is the corporate audience which Barth usually considers, their attitudes and needs are of no more importance than were the reader's when he approached the text.

> Though we may have all conceivable and even very accurate ideas as to the convictions and circumstances of the hearers, nevertheless, when we preach to them in faith in the promise of the presence and efficacy of the Word of God, only one thing concerns us in relation to them: "Thou hast borne all sin."[12]

In an article on preaching, Barth repeats Schleiermacher's statement about superior understanding but not in reference to the author of a text. Instead, it refers to the corporate audience. "They expect us to understand them better than they understand themselves, and to take them more seriously than they take themselves."[13] The justification for such a statement follows logically from Barth's scheme of Biblical hermeneutics. The preacher has been confronted and defined by the scriptures, and now speaks from the scriptures. Since the corporate audience is defined also from the scriptures, there is little possibility of the speaker's mistaking their profoundest questions. Just as the text determines the reader, so also does it determine the corporate audience.

It seems to me that Barth's remark here could be better understood, and still say what he intends to say, if we say that the Gospel is not "satisfying." The task of the inter-

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[12]Barth, Church Dogmatics I/1, pp. 153-4.

[13]Karl Barth, "The Need and Promise of Christian Preaching," in Word of God and Word of Man, trans. Douglas Horton (New York: Harper & Row, Harper Torchbooks, 1957), p. 109.

preter cannot be defined by the need to satisfy the demands or needs of the audience, but rather must be seen in terms of the "subject matter" which arises from the encounter between the text and the situation. Because the subject matter always has to do with the word "God" in some sense, the "qualitative difference" between God and persons always means something different than satisfaction. Whether the speaker knows this more than the listeners cannot be taken for granted.

Barth's hermeneutical proposal when seen in terms of Schleiermacher's distinction between a loose and a strict hermeneutics appears to be interested only in a loose hermeneutics. To the extent that understanding is blocked, hermeneutics is necessary, but misunderstanding is avoidable. In any case, the "crisis" occasioned by the Word of God makes any serious attempt toward the "art" of understanding human folly. From the perspective of a strict practice of hermeneutics, it seems that Barth denies the problem which hermeneutics seeks to solve.

One might suppose that Barth could be left out of a discussion of hermeneutics, and yet, as we said earlier, probably no one else has had such an impact upon hermeneutical reflection and has caused it to tremble with its "arts" and "methods." More specifically, Karl Barth influenced a shift from the central focus of romantic hermeneutics on the "genius" or self-expression of the author to the subject matter of a text. Secondly, he initiated a hermeneutics based upon a theology of the Word of God, and the paradox of God's Word

in human words; and thirdly, he blew the whistle on easy settlements between the culture and the Bible. Finally, Barth attested to God's activity in understanding and sought to clear away the schemes of interpreters so that God's Word could be heard.

Rudolf Bultmann

If Karl Barth's Romans was a "hermeneutic manifesto," as Gadamer has claimed,[14] then it was Rudolf Bultmann who most creatively responded to its call. In many ways, Bultmann agreed with Barth's theology, and especially his emphasis upon the freedom of the Word of God. However, perhaps due to his extensive work in Biblical form-criticism and comparative religions, he did not accept Barth's uncritical stance toward scripture. In his review of Barth's Romans, he agreed with Barth that the "subject matter" (die Sache) of the text, and not the author, was the substance of the text. For Bultmann, this meant that one must be critical of the author because "no man--not even Paul--can always speak only from the subject matter itself."[15] Bultmann did not wish to have Paul speak in his name, but rather to discover the ways in which, given the first century language and conceptuality, Paul had spoken in his own name. The scriptures, as first century documents, seemed much more complex, or at least more interesting, for

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[14]Gadamer, Truth and Method, p. 463.

[15]Rudolf Bultmann, "Karl Barth's Epistle to the Romans," in The Beginnings of Dialectical Theology, vol. 1, ed. James Robinson (Richmond, Virginia: John Know Press, 1968), p. 120.

Bultmann than they appeared to be for Barth.

Bultmann was not only more interested in the Biblical "world" but also in the "modern" world. In a sense this is easily understood, because of the close relationship between how one reads a book and how one reads the world.[16] For Barth, the text as a historical document raised just as few questions as did the modern world. However, the first-century world and the contemporary world possessed a strangeness for Bultmann which he did not ignore, and as a consequence he took up the question of hermeneutics much as Schleiermacher and Dilthey had done before him.

Another person who greatly influenced the development of Bultmann's hermeneutics was Martin Heidegger. As a student of Herrmann, Bultmann was already concerned with the question of faith and human existence, but during his colloquial work with Heidegger in the early twenties, he began to use the existential categories which Heidegger introduced to the public in his work Being and Time. As early as 1925, in an essay titled "What sense is there to speak of God?" Bultmann argued that because God is the one who determines our existence, it is impossible to speak of Him without speaking of ourselves.[17] Later in 1926 in his book Jesus he gave a description of what later was refined and became known as existential interpretation.

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[16] See Gabriel Josipovici, The World and the Book (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1971).

[17] Rudolf Bultmann, "What sense is there to speak of God?" in Faith and Understanding, trans. Louise Pettibone Smith (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), p. 63.

> When I speak of the teaching or thought of Jesus, I base the discussion on no underlying conception of a universally valid system of thought which through this study can be made enlightening to all. Rather the ideas are understood in the light of the concrete situation of a man living in time; as his interpretation of his own existence in the midst of change, uncertainty, decision; as the expression of a possibility of comprehending this life: tendencies and necessities of his own existence. . . . That we be ourselves deeply disturbed by the problem of our own life is therefore the indispensable condition of our inquiry.[18]

The final sentence represents a fundamental aspect of Bultmann's notion of interpretation. At first glance, it may simply be an articulation of an assumption that seems obvious; namely, that we usually understand the things we are interested in. Bultmann recognized this everyday view in a later article on hermeneutics: "I will, for example, interpret a text on the history of music in the light of the question of what it contributes to my understanding of music, and the history of music, and so on."[19] However, this view has a deeper grounding for Bultmann, and that grounding is his notion of the phenomenon of understanding itself.

Since Heidegger has worked out the analysis of understanding more thoroughly than Bultmann, we will briefly review Heidegger's description and then return to Bultmann. Bultmann's differences from Heidegger on this issue will further help us to clarify Bultmann's own position.

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[18]Rudolf Bultmann, Jesus and the Word, trans. Louise Smith and Erminie Lantero (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1934), p. 219.

[19]Rudolf Bultmann, "The Problem of Hermeneutics," in Essays Philosophical and Theological (London: SCM Press, 1955), p. 240.

For Heidegger, understanding is characteristic of human existence. It is not something Dasein acquires, but something that makes up the being of Dasein itself. "As long as it is, Dasein always has understood itself and always will understand itself in terms of possibilities."[20]

In a non-Heideggerian language, we could say that Dasein "knows" how "to get by" in the world. A sign of such knowledge is the way in which we "make a living" in the world; in the double sense of managing and living. Our understanding is "in the world," and at the same time, it is an understanding of being-in-the-world, that is, of existing. Furthermore, and this is the decisive point for hermeneutics, understanding is projective or futuristic. Hubert Dreyfus writes that for Heidegger, understanding is "not an intellectual analysis of a situation, but rather a nonthematic activity, a projecting forward into the future."[21]

In comparison with Schleiermacher, this futuristic conception of understanding signifies an important "turn" in hermeneutics. Whereas for Schleiermacher understanding of texts or history was primarily an understanding oriented toward the past, for Heidegger (and Bultmann), understanding is oriented toward future possibilities. "The ultimate reason for studying history is to become conscious of the possibili-

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[20]Martin Heidegger, Being and Time, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), p. 185.

[21]Hubert Dreyfus, Heidegger's Existential Phenomenology (Berkeley, California: Fybate Lecture Notes, 1972), p. 11

ties of human existence."[22] Or, as Oden writes, summarizing Bultmann's view: "man lives in his intentionality."[23]

Given this notion of understanding, interpretation, according to Heidegger, is the "development of the understanding."[24]

> In interpreting, we do not, so to speak, throw a signification over some naked thing which is present-at-hand, we do not stick a value on it; but when something within-the-world is encountered as such, the thing in question already has an involvement which is disclosed in our understanding of the world, and this involvement is one which gets laid out by the interpretation.[25]

Our interpretation follows our "involvements" or our ways of being-in-the-world. This "advance" of interpretation Heidegger calls the "fore-structure of understanding."[26] It rests upon the projective character of understanding and upon the fore-structure of Dasein itself. Because of the relationship between understanding and interpretation, Heidegger can say "All interpretation is grounded in understanding."[27] It follows then that interpretation brings to full understanding what has already (tacitly) been understood.

The other side of this proposition when applied to texts is: if one does not have at least a tacit understanding of the text's "subject matter," then it cannot be understood. This is Bultmann's hermeneutical claim. "The presupposition for understanding is the interpreter's relationship in his

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[22]Rudolf Bultmann, Jesus Christ and Mythology (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), p. 53.

[23]Thomas Oden, Radical Obedience: The Ethics of Rudolf Bultmann (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1974), p. 53.

[24]Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 188. [25]Ibid., p. 191.

[26]Ibid., p. 192. [27]Ibid., p. 195.

life to the subject which is directly or indirectly expressed in the text."[28]

If a "living relation" to the subject matter of the scriptures is required for understanding, then it is necessary to clarify just what the subject matter is. In the context of Bultmann's hermeneutic, the question of the subject matter (Die Sache) brings us to his program of demythologizing. In fact, this is the place where this controversial aspect of his hermeneutics should be taken up, for its purpose was precisely to address the question of how one discovers the subject matter of scriptures: that is, how to interpret the conceptuality (mythology) of the Bible in such a manner that the true "message" of the Bible may be disclosed.

Demythologizing became necessary because the modern world-view differed radically from the world-view of the Biblical world. We no longer view the world as controlled by supernatural beings, but rather understand ourselves in control and responsible for developing our own future. Bultmann distinguishes between two different aspects of the modern world-view. We have a conception of the world (Weltbild) and also a self-understanding which is expressed through this conception. The modern self-understanding is that we can find satisfaction and security in and from our dealings with the world.[29] If we are to understand adequately Bultmann's

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[28]Bultmann, "Problem of Hermeneutics," in Essays, p. 241.

[29]Rudolf Bultmann and Five Critics, "New Testament and Theology," in Kerygma and Myth, vol. 1, ed. Hans Werner Bartsch (New York: Harper & Row, 1961), p. 6.

hermeneutic, we must remember this distinction between understanding and conceptuality. E. C. Hobbs's following explanation of the difference helps to clarify Bultmann's proposal:

> An understanding . . . inevitably uses a conceptuality when it comes to explicit formulation; and for this formulation, every conceptuality uses a language as its vehicle. . . . The distinction between understanding and conceptuality will no longer be one of kernel and husk, for without conceptuality, an understanding cannot come to expression; we do not often refer to Greek as the husk of the New Testament, concealing the kernel. Rather, Greek makes possible the witness, even though the witness is not to Greek as such. So it is with conceptuality--it makes expression possible; and what is required is not wholesale acceptance, nor varying degrees of rejection, of the conceptualities of the New Testament--but only their interpretation.[30]

So, the conflict which arises between the modern and the Biblical conceptuality is not the conflict that centers upon the subject matter of the text. It is only a conflict between different conceptions of the world. Since it is impossible for a modern person to sacrifice his or her intelligence and believe in a mythological world of angels and demons, or at least it is impossible if one wishes to continue to live in the modern world, this conflict obscures the true subject matter of the scriptures. Demythologizing enables one to avoid falling into this false conflict and facilitates the openness to the true conflict, which has to do with the question of self-understanding, not conceptions of the world.

Because Bultmann acknowledges the difference between the cosmological view of the first and twentieth centuries,

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[30]E. C. Hobbs, "Recognition of Conceptuality as a Hermeneutical Tool," in Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur, Band 88 (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1964), pp. 476-7.

he would not, it seems to me, accept Barth's program for reading Paul ("allow him to speak in my name and I am even able to speak in his name myself").[31] We said earlier that Barth at this point was reminiscent of Schleiermacher in that the different historical contexts of the interpreter and of the author of the text did not hinder the interpreter from entering the world of the text. For Bultmann, the reader as interpreter does not enter the mythological world of the scriptures, but rather interprets it.

Embedded in the mythology of the Bible is an understanding of human existence which gives us the true subject matter, and this creates the "conflict" between the modern person and the Bible which Bultmann hopes to make recognizable.[32] In other words, the "issue" is not one of world-conceptions, but rather one of human existence.

Remembering what we said earlier about pre-understanding we can now say that for a modern person to "hear" the Gospel, he or she must tacitly have some understanding of this "issue," or more precisely, of his or her own existence.

> "You must exist." Without this decision, without the readiness to be a human being, a person who in responsibility takes it upon himself to be, no one can understand a single word of the Bible as speaking to his own personal existence.[33]

If human existence is the "common link" between the reader and the text, is Bultmann repeating Schleiermacher's

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[31] See page 113, above.

[32] Kerygma and Myth, p. 10.

[33] Jesus Christ and Mythology, p. 57.

"common humanity"? The parallel is not without merit, but the differences between Bultmann and Schleiermacher may be greater than the similarity. Being closer to Barth than to Schleiermacher at this point, the goal of Bultmann's hermeneutics is not a reconstruction of the creativeness of the author, but rather an encounter with the subject matter of the text.

Even more than Schleiermacher, it is Dilthey who stands behind Bultmann. Prior to Heidegger, as we have seen, Dilthey had already uncovered the historical character of interpretation, and incorporated it into hermeneutics. One may find evidence of Bultmann's indebtedness to Dilthey not only from his careful explanation of Dilthey's hermeneutics in the essay "The Problem of Hermeneutics," but also from his comment on the renewal of interest in the hermeneutical problem. "Only since the first World War has the interest in hermeneutics revived, when the work of the great German philosopher Wilhelm Dilthey became effective."[34] Bultmann can be seen as continuing to develop Dilthey's claim of historical existence, which through his cooperative work with Heidegger, now becomes clearly futuristic. However, Bultmann moves in a different direction from Heidegger (and Dilthey) at this point, because his interest is not only to become aware of the possibilities of human existence, but to show how these possibilities become realized. In order to follow Bultmann's own hermeneutic, it is necessary to examine his view of the relationship between faith and understanding.

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[34]Ibid., p. 46.

We have seen that to understand a text, one must have some life-relation with the subject matter. The universal question of human existence, Bultmann says, provides such a relationship with the subject matter of the scriptures, because the question of existence, tacitly, is also the question of God.

> Man does have in advance a relation to God which has found its classical expression in the words of Augustine: "tu nos fecisti ad te it cor nostrum inquietum est, docec requiescat in te." (Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our heart is restless, until it rests in Thee.) Man's life is moved by the search for God because it is always moved, consciously or unconsciously, by the question about his own personal existence. The question of God and the question of myself are identical.[35]

Although there is little in Heidegger's analysis that would lead one to affirm Augustine's statement, he does clearly explore the phenomenon of restlessness, to use Augustine's terminology. In any case, this restlessness can be seen as the pre-supposition for Biblical interpretation. However, an existential analysis of this restlessness is not yet understanding. In Bultmann's view, the analysis of one's existence, or even the questioning of one's existence does not entail the power to answer one's own question, to decide one's self. Through philosophical analysis one can discover that one's existence is uniquely one's own, and that it must be chosen, but only theology can speak of one's possibility in such a way that a decision can be authentically made.[36]

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[35]Ibid., pp. 52-3.

[36]Rudolf Bultmann, "The Historicity of Man and Faith," in Existence and Faith, trans. Schubert M. Ogden (New York:

To understand Bultmann's assumption, it is helpful to return to his analysis of the modern age. We have seen that the modern conceptuality of the world gave rise to the interpretation of Biblical mythology so that a false conflict between diverse world conceptions would be avoided. However, it is not possible in the same way to "accommodate" the modern self-understanding. Here the "conflict" must be fully exposed.

One way to see the conflict is in terms of the question wherein one places ultimate security. The enigma of modern self-understanding is that the "world" appears to be a place of final security, and yet at the same time, it also is seen as being at one's disposal. The resulting entanglement of man and world, and the self-understanding which it assumes, finds itself in "conflict" with the self-understanding expressed in the scriptures which acknowledges God's sovereignty, and finds the future to be God's and not the world's.

The exposure of this conflict occurs through the preaching of the Gospel, which can be best understood in this context as the "eschatological event." "Jesus Christ is the eschatological event not as an established fact of past time, but as repeatedly present, as addressing you and me here and now in preaching."[37] This preaching is a "summons" or "address" calling the listener to acknowledge the true future of the world, of God, and of himself or herself. With the coming of Jesus (the eschatological event), the history of the world

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Meridian Books, Living Age Books, 1960), p. 93.

[37] History and Eschatology, pp. 151-2.

and of nations is brought to an end, and a different dimension of history is disclosed, namely the "historicity of man."[38] The individual is addressed through preaching, and as the "event" of this preaching is acknowledged, a new self-understanding is gained. It is this complex of acknowledgement and self-understanding that Bultmann calls "Faith."

> In faith the believer has found the understanding of his own existence, because he no longer understands it from the world's standpoint but from God's--and thereby it has lost for him its enigmatic quality.[39]

However, faith does not mean at all that the listener now agrees to a set of beliefs or has become "religious."

> Jesus does not bring a teaching which one receives from him and which one can afterwards know so that one no longer needs him. Men do not go to him as to a hierophant to gain a mysterious wisdom; they come to him. He is the truth; he is the Word. Understanding is therefore not an apprehension of content; it is faith.[40]

It is this acknowledgement of what is interpreted and preached that makes understanding possible, or better said, is understanding. The distinction between an abstract or general knowledge of God and the existential acknowledgement of God is of such decisive character that Bultmann can say "Knowledge of God is a lie if it is not acknowledgement of him."[41] In other words, it is only through being summoned

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[38]Ibid., p. 43.

[39]Rudolf Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament, vol. 2, trans. Kendrick Grobel (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955), p. 84.

[40]Rudolf Bultmann, "The Concept of the Word of God in the New Testament," in Faith and Understanding, p. 310.

[41]Rudolf Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament, vol.

by the "interpretation" that one "knows" the summons.

Now, in order for a listener to understand the summons, there must not only be conflict but also some point of contact between the modern and the scriptural self-understanding. Bultmann deals with this issue in terms of the relationship between God and man in an essay entitled "Points of Contact and Conflict," which we will briefly review.[42]

First of all, by the very nature of who is who, "God's action conflicts with man," but at the same time this very conflict is also, in a paradoxical sense, a contact, since the conflict itself presupposes that persons and God are related through contradiction.[43] This leads Bultmann to say: "One cannot then point to this or that point of contact in man, in his intellectual life and in his history. Rather is man in his existence, taken as a whole, the point of contact."[44] Bultmann then moves to a second point, namely, that the conflict between God and man must always take its form in and through human discourse, which leads him to suggest that man's language is the point of contact for the Word of God.[45] Since there does not exist any "God's language" or "religious language" for the Christian faith, but only human language, the conflict between God and man always takes form in the language of the people. Remembering the first point, namely that the

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1, trans. Kendrick Grobel (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), p. 213.

[42]Rudolf Bultmann, "Points of Contact and Conflict," in Essays, pp. 133-50.

[43]Ibid., p. 136. [44]Ibid., p. 137. [45]Ibid.

conflict's contact is with human existence as a whole, Bultmann then says:

> To put it more precisely: the form in which at any given time man's understanding of existence has been expressed --the expression which his conflict with God, and the question of his real being have found for themselves is the point of contact--and therefore, in a special way, his religion, his conception of God, his ethics and his philosophy is the point of contact.[46]

The rest of this essay illustrates how in the New Testament itself various writers make "contact" with the thought forms of gnosticism, stoicism, and the hellenistic mystery-religions, and in these various "conceptualities" allowed the "conflict" between man and God to be revealed. So also with the modern age, it is within the language of the listeners, and the thought-forms they use in their questions of existence, that the conflict between the world and God is revealed, and the claim of God is acknowledged.

The results of this view of interpretation would seem to imply the following in terms of the audience of the interpreter:

1. The audience, whether the reader of the text or the hearer of the interpreter, is assumed to have taken the question of existence seriously, although not necessarily self-consciously.

2. The audience, as a modern phenomenon, serves as a criterion for interpretation in the sense that its modern conceptuality must be taken into account in the process of interpretation. The language and conceptuality used for

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[46]Ibid., pp. 137-8.

raising questions of existence, and the self-understanding expressed through them, may provide points of contact for revealing the conflict between a self-understanding which is lured by the "world" and one which is before God.

3. The event of understanding is seen as acknowledgement of God and not as knowledge of a set of beliefs or doctrine. However, these beliefs or doctrine may become a conceptuality through which the "event" of understanding may occur.

4. Understanding of the scriptures is essentially futuristic, eschatological, and not past. This is due not only to the subject matter of the texts, but also due to the structure of understanding itself; it is essentially projective.

It seems to me that these developments in hermeneutics are of decisive importance for the future of interpretation. Especially the projective character of understanding needs to be appropriated into any adequate theory of what audiences do when they "understand." Equally important, the insight of the priority of acknowledgement over knowledge gives us an essential character of what understanding entails. This insight has also been expressed by other views than existential hermeneutics. For example, Wittgenstein wrote "Knowledge is in the end based on acknowledgement."[47] These advances in hermeneutical theory will be incorporated in our later discussion.

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[47]Ludwig Wittgenstein, On Certainty, ed. G. E. M. Anscombe and G. H. von Wright, trans. Denis Paul and G. E. M. Anscombe (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), p. 49. See also Karl Barth's discussion of "acknowledgement" in Church Dogmatics I/1, pp. 205f.

CHAPTER III

UNDERSTANDING AS HEARING

In our discussion of Bultmann's hermeneutics, we moved from his early essays to essays that were written in the late fifties and early sixties. During this period, Heidegger and some of Bultmann's former students departed from the problem of understanding as it had been sketched by Bultmann, and focused their attention upon the problem of language. Ernst Fuchs and Gerhard Ebeling were two key persons in this move "beyond" Bultmann, and their work in hermeneutics became known as the "new hermeneutic."[1]

Although the exact character of Heidegger's shift of emphasis remains in some dispute, we do find that such categories as "being-in-the-world" and even "Dasein" were dropped as he becomes more concerned with the phenomenon of language and the relationship between language and Being. "The being of anything that is resides in the word. Therefore this statement holds true: Language is the house of Being."[2] This statement is indicative of Heidegger's later thought, which does not have the same affinity with the conditions of everyday

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[1]James Robinson and John Cobb, ed., The New Hermeneutic. New Frontiers in Theology, II (New York: Harper & Row, 1964).

[2]Martin Heidegger, On the Way to Language, trans. Peter Hertz (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), p. 63.

existence, as we find in Being and Time. Hermeneutics, a term he rarely uses, becomes identified more with poetics rather than rhetoric. The thinker becomes a "poet," receiving subtle inspirations beyond our common concerns.

> Singing and thinking are the stems
> neighbor to poetry.
> They grow out of Being and reach into
> its truth.[3]

Although it would be incorrect to see Fuchs, but especially Ebeling, as "followers" of Heidegger's later philosophy of language, they do make a turn from the early works of Bultmann toward language. In fact, to the extent that there is something "new" in the new hermeneutic, it is largely its emphasis upon the relationship between language and reality.

Ebeling brought to hermeneutics his earlier studies of Luther's theology, and Luther's emphasis upon the "hearing" of the word as an integral part of interpretation.[4] Another influence, although not as strong, was the thought and the life of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who had called for the "non-religious" interpretation of Biblical concepts."[5] One consequence of these influences, as well as the background of Barth and Bultmann, was the recentering of hermeneutics from the subject matter of the text, to the problem of proclamation or preaching. "The problem of theological hermeneutics would

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[3]Martin Heidegger, Poetry Language Thought, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper & Row, 1975), p. 13.

[4]Gerhard Ebeling, "Word of God and Hermeneutics," in Word and Faith, trans. James Leitch (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1963), p. 312.

[5]Gerhard Ebeling, "The Non-Religious Interpretation of Biblical Concepts," in Word and Faith, pp. 98f.

not be grasped without the inclusion of the task of proclamation; it is not until then it is brought decisively to a head at all."[6] This shift from the text to the speaker implied a new understanding of the text itself. It now becomes a "hermeneutical aid" for the understanding of the present.[7] Understanding also shifts somewhat, and becomes more closely identified with the "event" of preaching.

> For where the word happens,
> understanding is made possible.[8]

The relationship between understanding and language or speech (Sprache) is at the basis of Fuchs's hermeneutic as well. Verstehen ist primär Sprachverständnis. (Understanding is primarily speech-understanding.)[9] Fuchs's own background, however, is grounded more in Heidegger's early work on temporality,[10] and perhaps most significantly, upon research of the parables in the Gospels, instead of the writings of Paul, as is the case with Ebeling.

For both of them, the preached word itself is hermeneutical

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[6]Ebeling, "Word of God and Hermeneutics," p. 329.

[7]Ibid., p. 331.

[8]Ibid., p. 319. See also Ebeling's essay on the history of hermeneutics, where he defines hermeneutics as "zum Verstehen bringen" (to bring understanding), which also emphasizes the speaking definition of hermeneutics. "Hermeneutik," in Die Religion im Gischichte und Gegenwart, Dritte Aufgabe, vol. 2 (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1959), p. 243.

[9]Ernest Fuchs, Marburger Hermeneutik (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1968), p. 239.

[10]Richard Soulen, "Ernst Fuchs: New Testament Theologian," Journal of the American Academy of Religion 29 (December 1971): 482.

because it is itself a word of hearing. "The word which is intended in the proclamation is therefore a word which is determined by hearing, not merely a word which can be heard, but one which in its origin has already been heard."[11]

For Fuchs, the word can be heard because it is the repetition of Jesus' proclamation, which has already been heard. For both Fuchs and Ebeling, the task of hermeneutics is primarily concerned with the conditions for the power of speech, or for the discovery of the place where the word can perform its "hermeneutic function."[12] The designation of this place is the "hermeneutical situation." By examining their descriptions of this situation, we can see how the listener is perceived in their hermeneutics and the place he or she has within the hermeneutical process.

For both hermeneuts, the "actual situation" of modern persons must be taken into account. Ebeling says that religiosity is not a prerequisite for understanding the message of the Biblical message, nor is faith. The only prerequisite is that the listener is open to the question of faith.[13] However, because of the nature of reality, the actual situation of man must be understood as it really is. Reality (Wirklichkeit) is what is real (wirksam), or what is "effective," as the

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[11]Ernst Fuchs, "Jesus Understanding of Time," in Studies of the Historical Jesus, Studies in Biblical Theology, No. 42, trans. Andrew Scobie (London: SCM Press, 1964), p. 197.

[12]Ebeling, "Word of God and Hermeneutics," p. 318.

[13]Ebeling, "Non-Religious Interpretation of Biblical Concepts," p. 136.

German term connotes. So, hidden in the "actual situation" is man's "basic situation," which Ebeling defines as "word situation." The intimate connection or co-determination of reality and word means that one's actual situation becomes basic only when it is brought into speech. This is the hermeneutical function of words, namely, the interpretation of human existence as it really is. When this happens, then man's word becomes the Word of God.

> The word of God verifies itself as God's word precisely by addressing man with a recognition of his basic situation as word situation, that is, with a recognition of the fact that man as man is always one who is already being approached by God.[14]

Words, says Ebeling, are not to be understood by asking what they contain, "but by asking what they effect, what they set going, what future they disclose."[15] When word correctly happens, then understanding occurs, since the word as "event" brings understanding.

> When word happens rightly, existence is illuminated. . . . If the word is the thing which shows what the speaker is, then we should say: the precise purpose which the word is meant to serve is, that man shows himself as man.[16]

Given this duality of "actual" and "basic" situation, one may wonder how the character of the actual situation ultimately enters into Ebeling's hermeneutics. We can answer this question by looking at what Ebeling calls the "hermeneutical

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[14]Gerhard Ebeling, God and Word, trans. James Leitch (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), p. 44.

[15]Gerhard Ebeling, The Nature of Faith, trans. Ronald Gregor Smith (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1968), p. 187.

[16]Ebeling, "Word of God and Hermeneutics," p. 327.

principle" which is that man as man is "man as conscience."[17]

For Ebeling, conscience is the place where hearing occurs. There language and existence meet, and man knows himself as he really is. Besides the place of hearing, it is understood as "the coming together of man, the world, and God."[18]

Following traditional Lutheran theology, Ebeling asserts that the call of conscience reveals the divided nature of man, which he believes can be adequately interpreted by the theological topic of law and gospel. The "bad conscience" drives man to despair, which Ebeling interprets as being bound to the past, and the Gospel, liberates the conscience from the law (the past), and gives freedom for the future.[19] Translating the law and gospel topic into the duality of situations, the actual situation can be seen as the law and the basic situation, as the gospel. So, the task of the hermeneut is to discover how to interpret the actual situation so that the basic situation as Gospel becomes manifest.

> The task is precisely to ask ourselves anew in view of modern non-religious man what it means to take the law that belongs inseparably to the existence of man, and is in fact his very reality and testify to it as God's law.[20]

If the "hermeneutical situation" is ultimately the conscience, which on the one hand exhibits the linquisticality

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[17]Ibid., p. 332.

[18]Gerhard Ebeling, "Theological Reflections on Conscience," in Word and Faith, pp. 409-10.

[19]Ebeling, "Non-Religious Interpretation of Biblical Concepts," p. 144.

[20]Ibid., p. 147.

of existence, and on the other hand, the coming together of man, world, and God, then does hermeneutics move into such a narrow theological position that it easily overlooks the variety of listeners as well as of Biblical texts? Ebeling writes:

> The question which is ultimately appropriate to the biblical text is how it affects the conscience. The hermeneutical principle of proper exegesis of holy scripture is therefore man as conscience.[21]

He may be correct that with some texts and some listener-situations, the question of conscience, and the topic of law and gospel, may be entirely sufficient. However, he implies a "universal audience" to use Perelman's phrase, which, in point of fact, is difficult to see solely in these terms. It seems to me that Ebeling does not really include the "actual" situations in his hermeneutics, but rather imposes upon all situations (and Biblical texts) a particular topical interpretation which may be foreign to their own character. Fuchs's remark about the topic of law and gospel in regard to the teachings of Jesus seems to have some merit.

> There can be no talk of Jesus first of all having to force his hearers back ethically and morally into the confines of a contrite heart or conscience so as to be able to make clear to them that the person of the individual who is in irremediable distress would receive a new being through the word of forgiveness.[22]

In Fuch's discussion of the "hermeneutical situation," he points out that since neither the synoptic gospels nor the

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[21]Gerhard Ebeling, "Discussion Theses for a Course on Introductory Lectures on the Study of Theology," in Word and Faith, p. 428.

[22]Fuchs, "Jesus Understanding of Time," p. 146.

Gospel of John were guided by the topic of law and gospel, it is possible to develop a hermeneutic which has wider boundaries than this topic allows.[23] Even though Ebeling and Fuchs were close fellow-workers in hermeneutics, Fuchs's concentration upon Jesus' own proclamation, especially upon the parables, provided a basis for an original contribution to the understanding of the "hermeneutical situation."

For Fuchs, Jesus' proclamation was the announcing of a "new situation" in which the rule of God was present.[24] The unity between the proclamation and the new situation announced in the proclamation allows Fuchs to identify it as a "speech-event." Using the category of "being" to indicate the content of language, Fuchs describes "situation" as follows:

> The real content of language, that which is an event not only in language, but also precisely as language among man, is therefore being itself. But because being itself discloses in language something like our situation, as that which is ever and again understood between us, I term being itself situation. Situation is the essence of the language-event.[25]

In order to appreciate this statement fully, it is necessary to remember Fuchs's and Ebeling's understanding of the intimate relationship between language and reality. "Reality is the spokenness of speech."[26] Paul Achtemeier, who has extensively reviewed the "new hermeneutic," made the following interpretation of Fuchs's position:

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[23]Ernst Fuchs, "The Essence of the 'Language-Event' and Christology," in Studies of the Historical Jesus, pp. 219f.

[24]Ibid., p. 219. [25]Ibid., p. 222.

[26]Ernst Fuchs, Hermeneutik 4. Auflage (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1970), p. 131.

> But that means that reality is not only simply "what is." Rather it must be defined as that which can be expressed (zur Sprache gebracht) as present. What cannot be expressed, on the other hand, appears unreal.[27]

So, for Fuchs, to have a situation without language would be impossible; language creates situations.

However, Fuchs also discusses "situation" in terms of understanding and self-understanding. Although it would be a mistake to disassociate understanding from language, it still remains true, as for Bultmann, the addressee of the interpretation of texts must perform the act of taking himself or herself seriously.

> The New Testament makes in fact a hermeneutical presupposition. It assumes that persons relate to themselves, so that they can understand, when they are addressed in terms of the question of one's self.[28]

This self-understanding for Fuchs is not as individualistic as commonly seen in Bultmann, but rather is based upon a common understanding.

> A self-understanding is possible only because there is that which is commonly understood as a matter of course. Thus, self-understanding in distinction from self-consciousness, is supplied by one's heritage. The basic function of self-understanding is to work with language, in sharing in the linguistic administration of the common understanding transmitted in the heritage. Only when the common understanding is put in question does the self-understanding become consciously a problem. This problem is a problem of language, in that one is no longer in common agreement as to the "world" in terms of which one lives. The individual alone cannot master this situation, since he is and remains dependent on language, i.e., on others, i.e., on common understanding with other. So what results as self-understanding in this situation

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[27]Paul Achtemeier, "How Adequate is the New Hermeneutic?" Theology Today 23 (April 1966):107.

[28]Fuchs, Hermeneutik, p. 117.

> is never dependent on the individual alone. For this reason this self-understanding cannot be communicated directly, but can be "understood" only belatedly, in the language produced anew in a contexted or newly occurring common understanding. This new language will have to distinguish itself from the old, and at the same time still make clear the call involved in understanding, in which we are to respond "with ourselves." Then we say to each person, or, better, we give him to understand, what is to be expected of him, for him to be able to live in common agreement with us--in case we do not withdraw ourselves from him completely.[29]

This "new understanding" Fuchs calls a "language gain" in the sense that it moves the common understanding which has been broken into a new situation of completeness and unity. The whole description reminds us of our previous discussion in part I, chapter II, on the rhetorical situation, where we described how "situations" emerge out of occasions when the taken-for-granted assumptions of everydayness are interrupted. It seems that the description would not be foreign to Fuchs's understanding, nor to his notion of a "language-event" which brings about a now common understanding. What Fuchs does add or at least make explicit is the historic and the linguistic character of situations and therefore of understanding.

Given this description of self-understanding and common understanding, the next question is how does understanding happen. The primary question for Fuchs is not what understanding is, but rather how it comes about, which he approaches through an inquiry about the "place of truth." This place he calls the hermeneutical principle. The principle "shows us

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[29]Ernst Fuchs, "Response to the American Discussion," in The New Hermeneutic, pp. 240-1.

where we must go, if truth is to encounter us."[30] His answer to the question of "where" rests upon the notions of time and existence. Since they are intimately related, we shall begin with the notion of time.

Fuchs illustrates the relationship between time and understanding with a description of the language used in a family situation.

> The mother usually announces with her words the time, as time to get up, to eat, to work, to play, to go to sleep, etc. She says: "Come!", "Go!", "Watch out!", etc. Or she uses her words to fill up the present, by telling a story, etc. . . . All this is announcing time.[31]

Understanding comes about "at home" because the members of the family live in common agreements as to different times. So Fuchs can say: "At home one does not speak so that people may understand, but because people understand!"[32] Because of the common understandings of the family, language can perform its distinctive function which is that of announcing the time.

> What is distinctive about language is not the content of the individual words, not the thought or the designation, but rather its use, its application, its concentration upon the time and thus upon the distinction of times.[33]

Employing this understanding of "time," Fuchs interprets the proclamation of Jesus as the announcement of a "new" time. "Jesus' preaching is exactly like his conduct, his whole appearance: it is quite simply the announcement of the time

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[30]Fuchs, Hermeneutik, p. 111.

[31]Ernst Fuchs, "The New Testament and the Hermeneutical Problem," in The New Hermeneutic, p. 125.

[32]Ibid., p. 124. [33]Ibid., p. 125.

itself, the new time of the Kingdom of God."[34] "Faith," then, becomes the willingness to hear that "now the time has come in which God comes forward as God."[35] This "new time" is what is to be "translated" into the present in such a way that it interprets the "time" of the present. As with Bultmann, the "time" is now one of acknowledging God's presence and through this, gaining a new self-understanding.

> The historic advance (Vorsprung) of the language which is preserved in the New Testament opens for us the dimension of the question about ourselves in history, as the time of self-understanding.[36]

Therefore, the time of Jesus, as God's visitation, becomes "the content of Faith and therefore of proclamation."[37] The "language-gain" of Jesus' proclamation is precisely this "advance" of the New Testament which makes possible a similar language-gain as the proclamation of Jesus becomes proclamation again for us.

Fuchs calls his interpretation an "existential interpretation," because it inquires about the understanding of time which brings existence into being. Existence is that reality in which one is so related to Being, that one can decide what one will do.[38] The proclamation gives time for a person to decide about himself or herself and this giving of time is a

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[34]Ibid., pp. 128-9. [35]Ibid., p. 129.

[36]Fuchs, Hermeneutik, p. 140 (translation mine).

[37]Fuchs, "The Essense of the 'Language-Event' and Christology," p. 227.

[38]Ernst Fuchs, "Hermeneutik," in Glaube und Erfahrung (J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], Tübingen, 1965), p. 131.

language-event. Language announces and gives time.

Interpretation, therefore, centers upon the repetition of the "time" of Jesus, and thereby recreates the "situation" his preaching brought into being. This is the "place of truth."

What seems to be missing in Fuchs's hermeneutic is an answer to the question of how the "common understanding" of contemporary persons, which he spoke of in terms of family life, relates to the "new" time of Jesus' proclamation. Perhaps this is because in the final analysis, Fuchs follows the same path as Ebeling in his understanding of the direction and goal of hermeneutics: namely, a path from the text to proclamation. The hermeneutical question is limited to how "proclamation that has taken place is to become proclamation that takes place."[39] The audience-situation, or to use Fuchs's phrase, the "common understanding" of the contemporary hearers, is not on that path, but rather only at its end.

Robert Funk's enumeration of the elements of the new hermeneutic reflects this judgment. He lists the text, the interpreter, the interpretation, and the rules governing interpretation, but not the hearers or audience of the interpretation.[40] The new hermeneutic can be seen as emphasizing the logos of communication, giving little attention to the pathos and ethos elements, but more importantly, the logos takes on the double meaning of speech and speaking. In sharp

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[39]Fuchs, "The New Testament and the Hermeneutical Problem," p. 107.

[40]Funk, Language, Hermeneutic and Word of God, p. 10.

contrast to Schleiermacher, who sought to get behind speech to "understand" the internal process of thought, for the new hermeneutic, speech as an event brings about understanding itself. In this sense, they follow what Schleiermacher called a loose practice of hermeneutics. Ebeling writes "hermeneutics, is requisite only in the case where the word-event is hindered."[41] The question is whether the problems of understanding are really addressed by this loose practice of hermeneutics. By focusing upon the power of speech to bring understanding, have they not come close to a rhetoric of words?

In effect, the "new hermeneutic" presents something close to an "art of speaking" which exists without a method of invention. Given this situation, it is no surprise to read Piguet's quotation in the recent work of Ebeling's on a theory of language:

> But the greatest and most difficult problem of language at the present day is not concerned with the relationship between the act of speaking and what is said, but between the act of speaking and what should be said. For the crisis of our time is not caused by our inability to speak, but by our no longer knowing what we should speak about.[42]

So, on the one hand, the "new hermeneutic" is founded upon and bothered by the effectiveness of speech. Ebeling writes: "The purpose of a spoken utterance is to set the listener into action in the direction of understanding."[43] This brings

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[41]Ebeling, "Word of God and Hermeneutics," p. 318.

[42]Gerhard Ebeling, Introduction to a Theological Theory of Language, trans. R. A. Wilson (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1973), p. 166.

[43]Ibid., p. 174.

their hermeneutic to the question of the relationship between the speaker and listener. However, on the other hand, they essentially remain within the Schleiermachean framework of hermeneutics, and do not include the listeners as significant contributors to the construction of speech. In a sense, they are the closest of all persons we have discussed to uniting rhetoric and hermeneutics, and yet at the same time, the rhetoric they imply is simply that of the "good speaker," without the processes of discovery and invention of what to say. So, they are also the furtherest away from the rhetoric which seems to be most helpful to hermeneutics today.

Fuchs has written that the New Testament "speaks the language of hearing,"[44] and this could direct us to listen to those who have heard and to discover in their situations what there is to say. However, this implies the re-entry of the hearers into the center of hermeneutics. The "new hermeneutic" has not effectively made this move.

Another of the former students of Bultmann and Heidegger has at least opened this possibility through what he terms the "re-discovery of the fundamental hermeneutical problem."[45] The fundamental problem is the issue of "application." It seems to me that Hans-Georg Gadamer's "re-discovery" has opened the way to take seriously Ebeling's question of what we should speak about by including application in the hermeneutical program.

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[44]"The New Testament and the Hermeneutical Problem," p. 144.

[45]Gadamer, Truth and Method, pp. 274-5.

CHAPTER IV

UNDERSTANDING AS INTEGRATION

In the hermeneutics of Barth and Bultmann, we saw how understanding was described as "acknowledgement" of the interpreted subject matter (Sache). This view was further extended by the "new hermeneutic" to the point where understanding became equal to "hearing." This extension however appears to leave the audience in a position outside of the hermeneutical process. They become merely the listeners to the preacher's speech, and much as in Ciceronian rhetoric, the whole process of communication centers upon the speaker.

In Gadamer's hermeneutical philosophy, a new direction becomes open which suggests a different view of the audience. The new direction comes about through his retrieving of the notion of application for hermeneutics.

However, his re-discovery of application does not simply repeat the earlier description of this element of hermeneutics, which tended to see application as what the interpreter did after he understood a text. Rather, Gadamer suggests that application is an integral part of the hermeneutical task, a part of understanding itself.

Gadamer begins his discussion of application by referring to the practice of legal and theological hermeneutics. Here understanding texts, he says, is always dependent upon

their particular meaning in a given case or situation.

> In both legal and theological hermeneutics there is the essential tension between the text set down--of the law or of the proclamation--on the one hand and, on the other, the sense (Sinn) arrived at by its application in the particular moment of interpretation, either in judgment or in preaching.[1]

When the judge, or a jury, must decide whether someone is innocent or guilty, the "meaning" of the text is decided through the decision given. In fact, the decision in the current situation may even enable a further "understanding" of the text's "intent," just as the text's intent may help one understand the situation. It is precisely this exchange between text and situation which allows Gadamer to say: "Understanding here is always application."[2]

Is it the same with theological hermeneutics? Gadamer believes this to be the case, although in theological hermeneutics the priority of the subject matter over the interpreter's authority is more obvious. However, it remains true that only in application is there understanding.[3] More importantly, this is true for all hermeneutics. "We, too, determined that application is neither a subsequent nor a merely occasional part of the phenomenon of understanding, but co-determines it as a whole from the beginning."[4]

In order to see how application actually co-determines understanding for Gadamer, we shall briefly look at his description of understanding.

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[1]Gadamer, Truth and Method, p. 275.

[2]Ibid. [3]Ibid., p. 297. [4]Ibid., p. 289.

Being a student of both Heidegger and Bultmann, Gadamer's notion of understanding is essentially a development of their positions. Probably the most significant addition by Gadamer is the further development of the relationship between understanding and tradition. As with existential hermeneutics, understanding is fundamentally futuristic, and prior to interpretation. Gadamer speaks of this "pre-understanding" as the "horizon" of the interpreter. The horizon not only projects itself into the future, but also receives its formation from the tradition or heritage of its own past. In other words, "horizon" expresses the future possibilities which the past gives to the present. This "historicity of existence" is what constitutes understanding and gives to understanding what Gadamer calls prejudices.[5]

Prejudices are not hindrances to understanding, as the Enlightenment thought, but rather the basis of new understandings. They are the links with the past which allows one to integrate truths which have become strange or alienated from the present. So, on the one hand, Gadamer can say: "We are always affected, in hope and fear, by what is nearest to us, and hence approach, under its influence, the testimony of the past."[6] And at the same time, "Hence the horizon of the present cannot be formed without the past. There is no more an isolated horizon of the present than there are historical horizons."[7] It is the historical continuum of our present with tradition which Gadamer wishes to make explicit, in order

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[5]Ibid., p. 245. [6]Ibid., p. 272. [7]Ibid., p. 273.

to show the manner in which understanding occurs.

In hermeneutical practice, one may project an historical horizon of a text, thereby distinguishing the otherness of the text's horizon from our own, and avoiding a mere subjective interpretation. This allows the text to gain an autonomy from the present. However, understanding occurs through the deconstruction of these horizons, of the present and past horizon, through what Gadamer calls the fusion of horizons.[8]

The conscious act of fusing horizons, Gadamer says, is the work of the "effective-historical consciousness" (wirkungsgeschichtliche Bewusstsein), which is an awareness of history's "effect" upon our situation. He describes history's "effect" as follows:

> It determines in advance both what seems to us worth enquiring about and what will appear as an object of investigation, and we more or less forget half of what is really there--in fact, we miss the whole truth of the phenomenon when we take its immediate appearance as the whole truth.[9]

In other words, effective historical consciousness is operative in the choice of the right questions to ask: questions which will be appropriate for what the tradition has to say. However, this principle of effective history does not automatically give us the "correct" answers, but rather exists within the forgetfulness and estrangement which also characterizes the relationship between the tradition and the present. So, for Gadamer, the standing within tradition is both a sign of the finitude of human existence and yet at the same time, the

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[8]Ibid. [9]Ibid., pp. 267-8.

possibility of the productive reality of our historicity.[10] Because the present is actually shaped by the past, even if this has been forgotten, the integration of the past and the present is possible. However, this should not be understood as the subjective experience of the interpreter so much as the process of tradition itself.

> The understanding is itself not so much to be considered as an action of one's subjectivity but as the placing one's self within a process of tradition in which the past and present are constantly fused.[11]

We can observe the alternative which Gadamer's hermeneutics presents in regard to Dilthey's view of historical understanding, which in many ways is its predecessor. Gadamer believes that, whereas Dilthey remained caught in the dilemma of historical subjectivity and objective knowledge, finally opting for a life-philosophy metaphysics as a way out of relativity, he successfully moves through this dilemma by giving historical consciousness the status of a presupposition for historical knowledge: a knowledge which presents itself through the process of integration. So, the interpreter and the text become subordinate to the effects of history, or to tradition. Linge describes Gadamer's view at this point as follows:

> The mode of being of understanding, therefore, is extensive and episodic. It is extensive in that each act of understanding is a moment of the life of tradition itself, of which text and interpreter are subordi-

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[10]David Linge, "Dilthey and Gadamer: Two Theories of Historical Understanding," Journal of the American Academy of Religion 41 (December 1973): 549.

[11]Ibid., p. 258.

> nate elements. It is episodic or eventful in that it constitutes an on-going process of "presencings" or "concretizations" of the past, in each new present.[12]

The "objectivity"of hermeneutics is also assured through the "medium" in which it occurs, namely, language. Language is "the universal medium in which understanding is realized."[13] For Gadamer, "medium" must not be understood as "means" but rather as that through which, not by which, communication lives.

> Linguistic communication sets its theme before those communicating like a disputed object between them. Thus the world is the common ground, trodden by none and recognized by all, uniting all who speak with one another. All forms of human community of life are forms of linguistic community: even more they constitute language. For language, in its nature, is the language of conversation, but it acquires its reality only in the process of communication. That is why it is not a mere means of communication.[14]

Taking dialogue as his model for communication, Gadamer turns to the hermeneutics of texts with the logic of question and answer. The text must be understood as an answer to a question, and it is through the construction of the horizon of the text's past that one discovers what this question is. By placing oneself in the questioning of the text, the "dialogue" of hermeneutics becomes alive. There exists a "hermeneutical conversation."[15]

Of course, the text itself cannot produce this conversation. As a written document, it is estranged from the tradition to which it belongs. On the one hand, the text

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[12] Ibid., p. 551.

[13] Gadamer, Truth and Method, p. 350.

[14] Ibid., pp. 404-5.

[15] Ibid., p. 349.

represents the "ideality of the word" in that it has become free from the particular situation to which it was a response.[16] "Literature," Gadamer writes, "has acquired its own simultaneity with every present."[17] On the other hand, writing is also alienated from the continuing tradition and conversations. It is, so to speak, silent. It is the interpreter who "awakens" the text through bringing his own horizon into contact with what the text says. "The text brings an object into language, but that it achieves this is ultimately the work of the interpreter. Both have a share in it."[18]

This mutual "play" between the text and the interpreter can be characterized as a search for a common language.[19] Just as in conversation, so in interpretation new formulations and understandings develop out of the dialogue. Because understanding includes application, it involves the formation of new concepts through the ever new integration of the "horizons" of the past and the present. In the following description of Biblical hermeneutics, one can clearly see the main thrust of Gadamer's hermeneutics and the possibilities it has for developing a mature view of interpretation:

> The understanding of a text has not begun at all as long as the text remains mute. But a text can begin to speak. . . . When it does begin to speak, however, it does not simply speak its word, always the same, in lifeless rigidity, but gives ever new answers to the person who questions it and poses ever new questions to him who answers it. To understand a text is to come to understand oneself in a kind of dialogue. This contention is confirmed by the fact that the

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[16] Ibid., p. 352. [17] Ibid., p. 353. [18] Ibid., p. 350.

[19] Ibid., p. 344.

> concrete dealing with a text yields understanding only when what is said in the text begins to find expression in the interpreter's own language. Interpretation belongs to the essential unity of understanding. . . . This observation holds true in every respect for the text of the Christian proclamation. . . . It is in the sermon, therefore, that the understanding and interpretation of the text first receives its full reality. . . . The actual completion of understanding does not take place in the sermon as such, but rather in its reception as an appeal that is directed to each person who hears it.[20]

This relationship between what the text says and what one says, when application becomes a central part of understanding, opens hermeneutics to the public situation as it has not been since Schleiermacher.

However, there is another movement in Gadamer's work which tends to deflect from this openness. The two options can be seen clearly in his use of the terms "application" and "appropriation." Whereas in the discussion of "application" he uses theological and legal hermeneutics as his primary models, later in the discussion of the universality of language, he uses the term "appropriation." To appropriate (aneignen) or "to make one's own" does not entail the same public and communal situation as "application" does. The shift to appropriation tends to withdraw hermeneutics from a public situation and return it to an individual and private experience. So that hermeneutics once again become an encounter solely between the text and the interpreter. In fact, this has been the primary understanding of recent hermeneutics,

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[20]Hans-Georg Gadamer, "On the Problem of Self-Understanding," in Philosophical Hermeneutics, trans. David Linge (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1976), pp. 57-58.

even in theological hermeneutics, as is demonstrated by such comments as that of Norman Perrin, who claims that the interaction between the interpreter and the text is "the climax of the hermeneutical process."[21] What is forgotten is the listeners for whom one began to interpret in the first place. It appears that the Schleiermacherean framework, even though broken through, has not been escaped by Gadamer, who certainly shows the direction one might take even if he did not take it.

His hermeneutics do provide an important complementary view to the emphasis upon acknowledgement in existential hermeneutics, namely, the work of integration. In the process of discovering a common language between the text and the situation, horizons are fused, and the present and past move forward toward a new future. It seems to me that the notion of integration provides us with an essential insight into how understanding of texts happens.

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[21]Norman Perrin, Jesus and the Language of the Kingdom (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), p. 12.

CHAPTER V

UNDERSTANDING OF POST-CRITICAL PARTICIPATION

Paul Ricoeur's hermeneutics represents not only the most recent major work in hermeneutics, but also in many ways a return to Schleiermacher's hermeneutical questions. In an essay, "Philosophical Hermeneutics and Theological Hermeneutics," which was presented at a colloquy of the Center for Hermeneutical Studies, Ricoeur presented his hermeneutics as a "return to the most precise and rigorous problematics of Schleiermacher and Dilthey."[1] Similar to Schleiermacher, Ricoeur defines hermeneutics as "an inquiry about the art of understanding involved in the interpretation of texts."[2]

Of course, Ricoeur's return is far from merely repeating Schleiermacher's answers. Rather he takes up his questions, which also means assuming the framework in which these questions were asked. In our earlier review of Schleiermacher's hermeneutics, we mentioned some of the limitations of this framework, and have tried to show how it has been either assumed or changed in later hermeneutical theories. Our rhetorical perspective in regard to the practice of understanding

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[1]Paul Ricoeur, "Philosophical Hermeneutics and Theological Hermeneutics," in Protocal of the Seventeenth Colloquy (Berkeley, California: Center for Hermeneutical Studies, 1975), p. 3. Hereafter referred to as "Philosophical Hermeneutics."

[2]Ibid.

has facilitated our awareness of his framework, and, since Ricoeur returns to Schleiermacher's problematic, we can now see more clearly the inadequacy of this hermeneutical proposal for interpretation. So the following discussion will engage in a critical analysis of Ricoeur's hermeneutics from the perspective of rhetorical theory, as well as from the advances in hermeneutics theory we have gained through twentieth century hermeneutics, especially from Bultmann, Heidegger, and Gadamer.

When one reads Ricoeur's latest works on hermeneutics, especially after reading Bultmann and Gadamer, one is struck by the non-historical approach that Ricoeur takes. This is due not only to his return to Schleiermacher, although, as in Schleiermacher, his hermeneutics has nothing to say about the audience of the interpreter, and one is left with the question: For whom is one interpreting? It is due also to the inclusion of Husserl's phenomenological methodology in his hermeneutics. Rasmussen, in his book on Ricoeur, wrote:

> Ricoeur is a rigorous methodologist. A foremost interpreter of Husserl, he has attempted to move beyond an eidetic phenomenology of a Husserlian type to a phenomenology of language incorporating a hermeneutic method. To understand Ricoeur is to understand that methodological transformation.[3]

In the discussion, the influence of Husserl's method will become apparent, but by way of introduction, it may be helpful to point out two contrasting movements in late nineteenth and early twentieth century thought. One, represented by Dilthey,

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[3]David Rasmussen, Mythic-Symbolic Language and Philosophical Anthropology: A Constructive Interpretation of the Thought of Paul Ricoeur (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1971), p. 4.

attempted to explain how knowledge is possible given the historicity of life and the historical consciousness of modern culture. A second trend, represented by Husserl, and in a sense more in line with the philosophical movement from Descartes to Kant, was concerned with thinking itself. It gave much less credit to the historical character of existence. Perhaps one could use the terms of existence and essence to point out these differences, but they are rather inaccurate. For our purposes, it is enough to say that Husserl's project, taken as a whole, did not place as much value upon the social and temporal aspects of existence as did Dilthey. Heidegger can be seen from this perspective as a philosopher, who, even though he applied Husserl's more rigorous phenomenological method to the question of Being, was even more influenced by Dilthey's understanding of historical existence. To the extent that Ricoeur has allowed Husserl to influence his hermeneutics, he moves in a different direction than Dilthey, Heidegger, and Bultmann. This can be readily recognized by the fact that he begins his hermeneutical reflections with the text itself, giving no allowance for the fore-structure of understanding or for the interpreter's situation to determine how one approaches the text.

In the essay mentioned above, Ricoeur lists four problematics of the text, and these four will serve as a guide for our discussion. The four are:

the text as a relation between writing and speaking
the text as a structured work
the text as a projection of a world

the text as a mediation of self-understanding.[4]

The question which provides the direction for the first problematic is what does writing do to discourse?[5] Ricoeur explains what happens by describing discourse as the dialectic of event and meaning. In writing, the meaning of discourse is detached from the event.[6] Writing takes up the "what is said" (the meaning) of discourse from the particular situation in which it was said (the event). Because the written text gains an independence from the situation in which the discourse occurred, it gains an autonomy which frees it from its author and original audience. In writing, discourse is de-contextualized. This allows the text to be re-contextualized on other times and places. "Thanks to writing, speech reaches all the way to us and touches us through its 'meaning' and its 'issue' which is at stake in it, although no longer through the 'voice' of its proclaimer."[7]

What are the consequences of this interpretation of written discourse? It would seem that it relegates such disciplines as historical criticism, archaeology, and the like to a trivial position in relation to understanding the meaning of texts. One is reminded of Karl Barth's Romans. Secondly, it ignores the tradition or history of transmission which have brought texts to us, and which create the "horizon,"

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[4]"Philosophical Hermeneutics," p. 3.

[5]Paul Ricoeur, Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning (Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1976), p. 25.

[6]"Philosophical Hermeneutics," p. 5. [7]Ibid., p. 7.

to use Gadamer's term, in which texts are read and interpreted. Finally, it results in a de-contextualization of the reader (which will become apparent when we reach the fourth problematic). On the other hand, as we saw in Gadamer's work, there is a change that happens in the act of writing. Texts are able to transcend the "world" in which they originated, but the question is whether they can be understood without some understanding of that world.

The Dead Sea Scrolls were "autonomous" for two thousand years, lying in caves in the Middle East. However, only when they were discovered and brought into a human community did they "say" anything. Furthermore, even though today they are "present" and their original community of Essences are not present, surely the various investigations of this sect have helped us to understand and translate these texts. It seems to me that texts are always part of a cultural history, and to give them an absolute autonomy over that tradition is to miss the context in which the work of interpretation makes sense in the first place.

Finally, is it possible to begin hermeneutics with the text? This seems to leave unanswered what has become a serious question today: namely, "Why read the text at all?" Does not one's situation turn one to a text and to the task of interpretation? If one accepts that hermeneutics is circular, that in some way one always returns from whence one started, then if one begins with the text one is likely to end there. Likewise, if one begins with interpreting one's situation, he

is also likely to end there.

If one asks why Ricoeur begins with the text, the answer seems to lie in the influence of Husserl's phenomenological method in his hermeneutics. In his book, The Symbolism of Evil, Ricoeur explores three movements in the interpretation of myths: the first naiveté, interpretation, and a second naiveté.[8] The first naiveté seems to be similar to the "natural attitude" of Husserl's phenomenological analysis and can be understood by what Ricoeur wrote in his study of Husserl's phenomenology:

> Initially I am lost and forgotten in the world, lost in the things, lost in the ideas, lost in the plants ard animals, lost in others, lost in mathematics. . . . For if I lose myself in the world I am then ready to treat myself as a thing of the world. The thesis of the world is a sort of blindness in the very heart of seeing. What I call living is hiding myself as naive consciousness within the existence of all things.[9]

This "natural attitude," or naiveté, is overcome through criticism, or in regard to texts, through interpretation. However, in contrast to Bultmann, where the presuppositions are necessary and even of positive value in hermeneutics, for Ricoeur, the first naiveté does not provide grounds from which one may begin an entry into the hermeneutical circle.

It may be that Husserl's non-historical phenomenology provides an explanation for much of Ricoeur's own apparent lack of interest in tradition and history. At the same time,

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[8]Paul Ricoeur, Symbolism of Evil, trans. Emerson Buchanan (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), p. 352.

[9]Paul Ricoeur, Husserl: An Analysis of His Phenomenology, trans. Edward G. Ballard and Lester E. Embree (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1967), p. 20.

Ricoeur moves beyond Husserl in his third movement, the second naiveté, or to use the term found in his more recent writings, in the act of appropriation. Before appropriation can happen, the text, through the process of distanciation, renders itself free from any type of easy, uncritical assimilation by the interpreter. This task is accomplished through the second and third problematics which Ricoeur has listed.

In describing the text as a "work" Ricoeur refers to the act of producing discourse, in terms of how the production characterizes the product, not in regard to the person who acted. Because written discourse is a product, it is possible to examine what holds it and its various parts together. Ricoeur points out three recognizable aspects of the text: its inner composition, its generic rules, and its individual style.[10]

> The concept of work must be taken literally. It implies the extension to discourse of categories proper to the world of production and labor. To impose a form upon a material, to subject a production to specific codes, to produce those unique configurations which assimilate a work to an individual and which we call a style, these are ways of considering language as a material to be worked and formed. They are ways in which discourse becomes the object of a praxis and a technique.[11]

The text's inner composition, its genre, and its style, are all structural elements of a text which through structural analysis can be discovered. Here the text is an "object" for examination. At the same time, through this examination

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[10]"Philosophical Hermeneutics,", p. 9.

[11]Paul Ricoeur, "Biblical Hermeneutics," in Semeia (Missoula, Montana: Scholars Press, 1975), p. 68.

of the text, the "discourse" of the text is not destroyed, but rather these traits of the text make references to this discourse, and in a sense, according to Ricoeur, elicit further interpretation.

> The objectification of discourse in a structural work does not suppress the fundamental and first trait of discourse, namely, that discourse is constituted by an ensemble of sentences where someone says something to someone about something. Hermeneutics, I would say, remains the art of discerning the discourse in the work. The result is that interpretation is the reply to the fundamental distanciation which constitutes the objectification of man in works of discourse, comparable to his objectification in the products of his work and art.[12]

Although this objectification leads to the third problematic, it is still important to ask "where" the interpreter is during this stage. It seems to me that Ricoeur assumes a "disinterested attitude" at this stage, which could be understood as the "transcendental ego" of the interpreter.[13]

In any case, from the analysis of the text as a "work," the hermeneutical movement passes on to the third problematic: "the text as a projection of a world." The "world of the text" is a "new being," which is displayed before the text, and projected by the text.

> What is then submitted to interpretation is the proposition of a world in which I could dwell, a world created by the project of my own utmost possibilities. For every unique text there is such a "world of text."[14]

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[12]Paul Ricoeur, "The Hermeneutical Function of Distanciation," Philosophy Today 17 (Summer 1973):139.

[13]See Hubert Dreyfus, Background of Existentialism and Phenomenology (Berkeley, California: Fybate Lecture Notes, 1974), p. 95.

[14]"Philosophical Hermeneutics," p. 12.

How does this text project "my own utmost possibilities"? One might be reminded here of Fuchs's discussion of the "new situation" which is created by the proclamation of the new time of God's presence, but Ricoeur has not given any backing which would lead us in this direction. Instead, Ricoeur says that the "world of the text," is given "nowhere else than in and by the structure of the work."[15] In other words, it is from the second problematic of the text as work that the text as "world" emerges.

In order to understand Ricoeur at this point, it is helpful to employ the distinction between sense and referent, which he borrows from Frege and Husserl. The "what" of discourse is its sense, and the "about what," its reference.[16]

Somewhat parallel to the distinction between event and meaning, the sense-reference categories arise from the written character of discourse. The "what" of discourse is its internal, ideal meaning, its sense, and can be understood without reference to any situation. Discourse's relation to a situation is its referential meaning. "To refer is what a sentence does in a certain situation and according to a certain use."[17] Because the text has been "freed from its situation, it has lost the first-order reference," but it has gained a "second-order reference," which is the "poetic discourse" of the text. He describes the poetic discourse as follows:

My thesis is that the suspension of a first-order

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[15] Ibid., p. 9.

[16] Interpretation Theory, p. 19. [17] Ibid., p. 20.

> reference, such as is achieved by fiction and poetry, is the condition of the possibility for yielding a second-order reference. This second-order reference no longer touches the world at the level of manipulable objects, but at the deeper level which Husserl designated by the term "life-world" (Lebenswelt) and Heidegger by that of being-in-the-world (in der Welt-Sein).[18]

To restate Ricoeur's thesis, the loss of the first-order reference, through writing, leaves the text as ideal meaning or as "sense" which he can approach as a "work" and this "sense" yields a second-order reference to a "world." Furthermore, this "world" is the "world of my own utmost possibilities." Two questions must be asked. What kind of "world" does a text display? and Who is doing this interpreting?

Ricoeur has illustrated what he means by the "world of the text" by using the notion of the "Greek world."

> Thus we speak about the "world" of Greece, not to designate any more what were the situations for those who lived them, but to designate the non-situational references which outlive the effacement of the first and which henceforth are offered as possible modes of being, as symbolic dimensions of our being-in-the-world.[19]

This illustration raises more questions than it answers. Is the "Greek world" projected from a text translated into English? Is this "Greek world" a reference to the "life-world" of women as well as men, or Greek men? What happens to the difference between the utmost possibilities of contemporary persons and the utmost possibilities of the Greeks? Finally, does the "Greek world" open up for us "new dimensions of our being-in-

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[18]"Philosophical Hermeneutics," p. 12. Ricoeur's equation of Husserl's and Heidegger's concepts here is most suspicious.

[19]Paul Ricoeur, "The Model of the Text: Meaningful Action Considered as a Text," Social Research 38 (1971):536.

the-world" as Ricoeur claims? Some of these questions appear to be without answers in the context of Ricoeur's hermeneutics, and the others can be answered by looking at who is presenting this "world of the text."

In order to answer these questions, it is necessary to notice once again the pervasiveness of Husserlian methodology in Ricoeur's hermeneutics. In Husserl's phenomenology, the "bracketing" of the natural attitude meant the bracketing of the referred to object and seeing the act of referring itself: to see one as referring. This change in attitude Husserl called the transcendental ego. Dreyfus explains Husserl's transcendental ego this way: "The natural ego straightforwardly perceives the world. The transcendental ego understands and looks through the natural ego, but considers only the referring, not the referred to."[20] The "referring" is the "sense," or the ideal meaning of the act of referring, and this ideal is timeless.[21] This aspect of Husserl's phenomenology parallels Ricoeur's description of what happens in the act of writing. The act of writing performs the phenomenological deduction. Ricoeur goes on to remove the bracket, so to speak, and then the text refers on a second-order level. If there is any person involved in this task, then it must be the transcendental ego of the interpreter, that is, an attitude which has bracketed its own everyday world. But even this is not a complete answer,

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[20]Dreyfus, Backgrounds of Existentialism and Phenomenology, p. 64.

[21]Ibid., p. 56.

because such an attitude would remain in the ego performing such a reduction, and for Ricoeur, literally no one is present in the work of moving from the text as "work" to the text as "world." Only in the fourth problematic, appropriation, does an interpreter come into play.

Before we turn to the fourth problematic, one more question can be asked. Is the function of discourse adequately described through the category of "reference"? Ricoeur has usually said that discourse is "about" something, and as we have seen, the notion of "reference" is essential to his analysis of the "world of the text." It seems to me that this term brings in a Husserlian problematic of the meaning of objects, and does not help to find the real center of language. Language, we could say, does not only "refer" but also "infers." It brings with it what is said, and infers more than is expressed, rather than points to objects or something outside itself. In this context, the rhetoric of inference seems more to the point than the "poetics" of reference.

In the fourth problematic, the "world" which the text projects becomes the "object of hermeneutics," and through appropriation becomes the interpreter's own world.

> What I may make my own--in other words, appropriate --is the pro-position of a world, i.e., the mode of being-in-the-world displayed by the text before the text, and not behind the text, as the intention of the author would be.[22]

In the act of appropriation, the text defines the reader and gives the reader a world. One is reminded of Barth's herme-

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[22]"Philosophical Hermeneutics," p. 17.

neutics of letting the text speak for itself. Such a comparison with Barth finds some confirmation in the following statement on understanding.

> To understand, therefore, is to understand oneself before the text. . . . This implies that the reader does not submit the meaning of the text to his own finite understanding, but that he lets himself be exposed to the text, in order to receive from it a Self. By Self I mean a non-egoistic, non-narcissistic, non-imperalistic mode of subjectivity which responds and corresponds to the power of a work to display a world. The Self is the correlate of the "thing" of the text.[23]

Several aspects of the notion of appropriation must be addressed. First of all, and already alluded to, is what seems like a Husserlian reading of Heidegger which results in a confusing use of Heideggerian categories, such as "being-in-the world."

Briefly, we can contrast Husserl and Heidegger by observing the difference between Husserl's "transcendental ego" and Heidegger's "Dasein." Dasein remains "in" the world in a way almost opposite to the "transcendental ego's" separation from anything worldly. For Heidegger, in contrast to Husserl, and evidently in contrast to Ricoeur, "being-in-the-world" is "the essential state" of Dasein.[24] Now if the interpreter is a Dasein, then it is impossible for it to become a "disinterested attitude" performing the structural analysis of a text which then "yields" a "world." As Dasein, the interpreter is already thrown into the world, is already "being-in-the-world." How can a text project a "being-in-the-world," which is not

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[23] Ibid., p. 17.

[24] Being and Time, p. 80. See Dreyfus, "Backgrounds of Existentialism and Phenomenology," p. 95.

related to the "finite understanding" of the reader, if the reader is the one who is interpreting the text? Only if one assumes a bracketing of the worldly thrownness of the interpreter and refuses to take the world of everydayness seriously. That is, only if one does not follow Heidegger's use of his own terms.

This brings us to a second consideration of Ricoeur's notion of appropriation: namely, just as at the beginning the discourse was de-contextualized, so now the reader is de-contextualized. Although Ricoeur differs from Schleiermacher in that the world of text, and not the author, is the object of hermeneutics, he follows Schleiermacher's disregard for the historicity of the reader. The text reconstructs the reader, to use Schleiermacher's term, instead of the reader's reconstructing the construction of the author, but the difference, in regard to the reader, makes little difference. Ricoeur's "poetics of discourse" leads us away from the temporality of hermeneutical practice, and back to Schleiermacher's exclusion of application from hermeneutics.

In the Center meeting, Ricoeur disagreed that he had not included application, but rather had simply used the modern term introduced by Gadamer, namely, appropriation.[25] But as we have shown in our discussion with Gadamer, this is really a confusion that resides in his work, when he moves from the examples of legal and theological hermeneutics, to the area of poetics. "Appropriation," as it is used by the later

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[25]"Philosophical Hermeneutics," p. 20.

Heidegger, Gadamer, and Ricoeur, is not a public category, nor does it include an audience for whom one is doing the task of interpretation, rather it is a privatized rendering of interpretation, which narrows the participants in hermeneutics to the text and the reader. Ricoeur's notion of appropriation, or post-critical participation as he also calls it, does provide hermeneutics with a procedure for overcoming an easy eisegesis of the text, and this must be considered a major accomplishment of his work. However, if the text through its autonomy is to have such superiority over the reader as he suggests, then "interpretation" does not really ever include the modern world, nor do we have a dialogue between the text and the situation as was suggested by Gadamer. Rather we have a deification of texts and the "world" they display. This position seems to surpass even Barth's advocacy of the text's superiority.

In conclusion, it seems that the a-historical approach which Ricoeur suggests in regard to both the "text" and the "reader" does not facilitate an adequate understanding of the task of hermeneutics. Furthermore, the return to Schleiermacher leaves the question of how application becomes an integral part of hermeneutics unanswered. It is this question, which Gadamer raised but did not follow, that allows the entry into the concerns of hermeneutics the contributions of rhetoric. The question of audience, both of the text and the interpreter, are significant questions for Biblical hermeneutics, and presumably for all hermeneutics. How that question may reform

the hermeneutical project, and the task of interpretation, will be the subject of the following part of our discussion.

Modern hermeneutics has shown us significant aspects of the audience, which neither rhetoric nor other theories of interpretation can lightly disregard. First of all, it has demonstrated that understanding is the kind of issue that "hermeneutical rules" or any other "rules" cannot successfully address. Understanding, from Schleiermacher to Ricoeur, is not a science in the common use of the term, but an art. Rules, at best, prevent us from taking the wrong track, but do not bring about the "event" of understanding. In this sense, Biblical hermeneutics which gives space for the Word of God in human speech is instructive for all hermeneutics. One cannot make another understand, but rather understanding is something that happens.

Secondly, hermeneutics has shown that the possibility of understanding is embedded in the listener's tacitly already understood possibilities for itself. One understands what is different, as different, because of some tacit or underlying similarity. The role of presuppositions (Bultmann) or prejudices (Gadamer) is fundamental to audience interpretation.

The audience must also be understood in its temporality, and in a multitude of ways. Belonging to a tradition or heritage, responding to what it is time for, projecting one's possibilities into the future; all these are ways in which temporality constitutes the dynamics of an audience.

The audience must also be understood as a linguistic

community. New understandings are based upon common understandings. It is the heritage of the common understanding that allows for the integration of new understandings of the heritage's future.

Finally, the audience is seen not as mere recipients of information nor as persons asked to agree with any set of beliefs, but rather as persons who may acknowledge what becomes "present" through interpretation. It is the acknowlegement of the subject matter which brings the audience to a new self-understanding and new ways of responding to their "interpreted" future.

The one most significant aspect of modern hermeneutics, introduced by Dilthey, and explored by Heidegger, Bultmann, and Gadamer, is the historical character of understanding. Ricoeur represents a move away from this hermeneutical principle, and it seems to me that instead of moving away, one needs to move further in exploring the historic character of audiences for whom one interprets. We will attempt to move in this direction in the following discussion.

As to the various proposals as to what understanding means, it seems to me that the notions of acknowledgement and integration complement each other in such a way that the hermeneutical task is clearly seen. On the one hand, in order for understanding to happen, the text and the situation must be united in some significant manner. Gadamer's notion of a common language explicates this interpretive process in an effective way. However, integration by itself is inadequate.

Because of the nature of the subject matter, and the nature of understanding something which one did not understand before, acknowledgement must also define understanding. Interpretation is both a process of integration which can be understood as the work of interpreting for someone else, and a demand of acknowledgement, which is a speaking to someone. Within the historical context of interpretation, these two movements can be seen as the basic elements of understanding.

PART III

THE INTERPRETIVE SITUATION

For a rhetorician, it is amazing and perhaps unbelievable that for the most part modern hermeneutics has never considered the audience for whom one interprets. For a hermeneut, it is probably equally disturbing that modern rhetorical theory, for the most part, has not bothered itself with questions concerning the phenomenon of understanding. In our discussion of these two disciplines, we have seen from rhetoric that the audience is an integral part of discourse and a co-constituent in the creation of speech, and we have seen from hermeneutics that understanding occurs within an historic horizon. In this section of our discussion, we will attempt to integrate these two perspectives of discourse.

Our point of departure will be the interpretive situation, which can be initially defined as where someone interprets something for and to someone else. The three basic elements of the situation are the audience, the interpreter, and a text. Beginning in this way, we have taken Gadamer's suggestion that application is a part of understanding from the very beginning, since the audience for whom one interprets is already present. Furthermore, since the audience is present it is likely that interpretation will not only begin, but also end, with the audience. This should allow interpretation to complete its

task which is to interpret a text for someone.

In the following discussion, we shall first examine the historic character of the interpretive situation, since it is only by recognizing the place an interpretive situation has in the on-going tradition of interpretation that one knows where and how to enter the interpretive enterprise. Secondly, the dynamics of the audience within this situation will be further explored, and finally, we shall suggest a description of the task of interpretation.

This discussion is based upon our previous analysis of rhetoric and hermeneutics, and by combining the strengths of these disciplines, we hope so to describe and elucidate the practice of interpretation that our description somewhat reflects what interpreters do in the everyday practice of interpreting something for someone else.

CHAPTER I

THE HISTORIC CHARACTER OF THE INTERPRETIVE SITUATION

Dilthey, Heidegger, and Gadamer have analyzed the historic character of interpretation most profoundly, and from their hermeneutical theories, we gain a beginning for our present exploration. Gadamer wrote of the "effect" of history upon the present: "It determines in advance both what seems to us worth enquiring about and what will appear as an object of investigation . . ."[1] In other words, as historical beings, we are situated in the world with certain possibilities which give shape and direction to our perceptions of what constitutes a subject for interpretation. At the same time, this "history" is for the most part forgotten, and this leads Gadamer to conclude the above remark thusly: ". . . and we more or less forget half of what is really there--in fact, we miss the whole truth of the phenomenon when we take its immediate appearance as the whole truth."[2] The first half of Gadamer's statement makes interpretation possible, because history "gives" direction and creates a "horizon." The second half makes interpretation necessary, because the total context of the present has been forgotten. This cardinal principle of modern

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[1] Truth and Method, p. 267. [2] Ibid., p. 268.

hermeneutics, which can be seen in Dilthey's analysis of historical understanding, Heidegger's notion of the fore-structure of understanding, and Gadamer's concept of "prejudices," provides the point of entry for any adequate description of the interpretive situation.

When we follow Gadamer's proposal further, we find that the primary character of tradition is its linguisticality. Gadamer writes: "But tradition is not simply a process that we learn to know and be in command of through experience; it is language, i.e., it expresses itself like a "Thou."[3] For Gadamer, language is the "medium" of hermeneutics. In order for interpretation to occur, it will live in this medium, as a fish must live in water in order to swim. To carry the analogy a little further, just as a fish encounters various currents, so also the interpreter encounters linguistic effects in the linguistic medium.

Kisiel has summarized Gadamer's view in the phrase: "the medium mediates."[4] This seems to indicate the strength but also a potential weakness of Gadamer's theory. On the one hand, language must be seen as more than a "means" of interpretation--we do live in a language-world. But on the other hand, a total emphasis upon language can lead to a kind of gnosticism, where the situatedness of persons is disregarded. Kisiel's comparison of Gadamer with the early Heidegger shows the potential weakness of the direction Gadamer suggests.

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[3]Ibid., p. 321.

[4]Theodore Kisiel, "The Hermeneutics of Gadamer and Heidegger," Man and World 2, 3 (1969):365.

Whereas Heidegger emphased the "throwness" of the person over his belonging to tradition (the first is the basis for recognizing the second), Gadamer concentrates upon the problem of belonging to tradition so as to make it primary.[5] This tends to collapse the historic into the linguistic, whereas at least the early Heidegger distinguished between the two. The question that Kisiel raises is important for our analysis of the interpretive situation because it helps us to formulate the composition of the historical context in which interpretation occurs.

In order to explore this question, we can profitably return to Heidegger's distinction between understanding and interpretation. Understanding, as a fore-structure of Dasein, is Dasein's projection of possibilities. Interpretation is the unfolding or making explicit of these understandings for the disclosure of one's existence in the world. Both Dasein's pre-understanding and its interpretation exist in an historical horizon, so we must say that "tradition" is composed of two different aspects, a pre-understanding and an interpretation. Both of these constitute the historical horizon of interpretation.

The tradition of interpretation includes the different practices of interpretation, both those employed in the past and those currently used. So, anyone who takes up the task of interpretation enters into this on-going tradition and becomes part of it. There is also a "tradition" of what has been interpreted, that is of pre-understanding, or what Gadamer

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[5] Ibid., p. 345.

called prejudices. Because interpretation is always interpretation of something, this something exists in-front-of the history of interpretation, and yet belongs to it.

In regard to the Biblical tradition, which will be our concern in this discussion, a distinction suggested by Paul Lehmann in an article on the Reformer's use of the Bible can be helpful. He distinguished between a Biblical apperception and a Biblical interpretation.[6] For the Reformers, Biblical interpretation was the way they derived the authority of the Bible from its content, while their Biblical apperception "has to do with all those ways in which in the use of the Bible, the Reformers were children of their time."[7] Furthermore, Lehmann suggested in his article, the failure of the Reformer's successors was to disregard the distinction between apperception and interpretation, and to give undue authority to past apperceptions which were no longer valid.[8]

In a recent conversation with Professor Lehamnn on Biblical hermeneutics, he further elaborated upon this distinction and its bearing upon rhetoric and hermeneutics. He gave the following response to my question whether apperception was how one moved inside the hermeneutical circle which then allows effective interpretation:

> Exactly. Of course people who do not know anything about the Bible, or who could care less about it, that is preposterous nonsense. Then, it seems to me, they are in the situation roughly parallel to the Roman

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[6]Paul Lehmann, "The Reformer's Use of the Bible," Theology Today 3 (October 1946):328-44.

[7]Ibid., p. 328. [8]Ibid., p. 342.

> culture between Augustus and Augustine in Cochraine's terms. They have all sorts of speculations about what is going on and hunches about this and that, but they don't have any real clues. On the other hand, it is a consequence of the Bible that there is a messianic apperception derived from a messianic happening which can be related to people who are innocent of the Bible or never think about it in those terms. Conceivably, that is what rhetoric is about, in the sense in which our various conversations have found us using the word, in distinction, let us say, from hermeneutics. Then in a pluralistic culture, what is at issue is whether there is or can be a formulative apperception which makes possible a communication over a wide spectrum, or to use the image of a wheel, a number of radii, as people are drawn to consider together the various claims and counter-claims that are made on the basis of how different people read experiences. Then the power of the Biblical imagination is somehow evident in the way that it opens up heights and depths of the human perception of the human condition otherwise closed to it.[9]

Biblical apperception, as it is explained here, approximates the history of effects which Gadamer has described as determining in advance "both what seems to us worth enquiring about and what will appear as an object of investigation."[10] Furthermore, as Gadamer has suggested, this "advance" of interpretation will determine the possibilities for understanding.

Although diachronically, the apperception and interpretation belong together, synchronically, it is possible that they may become separated. For example, Lehmann said of Marx:

> Now in Marx, it seems to me, there is a clear articulation of the messianic motif in history: a messianism which is hard to disassociate from his own Biblical apperception and indeed hard to disassociate from his own sharp critique of the existing state of religious institutions, particularly the messianic one, that is to say, the church. So it is a transfer of the messianic

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[9]Marvin Brown, "A Conversation with Paul Lehmann on Biblical Hermeneutics," (1977), pp. 10-11 (unpublished).

[10]See page 178, above.

identification but not an attestation of the messianic theme.[11]

If in Marx the Biblical apperception of the human condition can become splintered from Biblical interpretation, then it is also possible that the Biblical interpretation may become separated from Biblical apperception. If the first leads to an incomplete linguistic formation of the apperception, the second certainly leads to abstract chatter, or what Heidegger called "idle talk." In order that an interpretive situation be adequately constituted, there must be the co-existence of apperception and interpretation. Both of these, it must be remembered, at least diachronically, are "given" through the Biblical tradition, taken in its broadest and profoundest sense. So, even though these two can be distinguished for critical analysis, they are finally intimately related. The Biblical apperception functions as the "advance" of Biblical interpretation, or to use Gadamer's language, historical "effects" precede linguistic articulation.

Assuming that this "advance" provides the first clue for the work of interpretation, the next question is where it is likely to reside in the interpretive situation.

At this point one might wonder just what this Biblical apperception perceives. One of the most appropriate responses to this question is articulated by Lehmann: namely, it perceives "what God is doing to make and to keep human life human in the

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[11] Brown, pp. 8-9.

world."[12] Or, Herbert Schneidau's phrase "sacred discontent" is also suggestive.[13] However, the answer to this question is bound up with the interpretive task itself, and can finally be acknowledged only through interpretation. So we are directed back to the interpretive situation and the Biblical apperception of that situation.

In a sense, it is apperception which makes the situation appear as a situation. As we recall from our discussion of the rhetorical situation, it is precisely the "exigence" or "question" which brings about the occasion for speaking or in this case interpretation. However, the "exigence" becomes such only when someone perceives it, so we must turn to the three components of the situation: the audience, the interpreter, and the text, and ask: "Who is the primary bearer of the apperception of the "question" which constitutes a situation?"

I would like to suggest that it is the audience, for the following reasons. First of all, since the "question" itself is perceived through the historically effected manner of existing in the world, it belongs, however obliquely, to tradition. Tradition, almost by definition, must be communal and not individualistic. In other words, the "they," to use Heidegger's term, is already there for any individual Dasein, and it is the everydayness of the "they" that determines what

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[12] Paul Lehmann, Ethics in a Christian Context (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), p. 99.

[13] Herbert N. Schneidau, Sacred Discontent: The Bible and Western Tradition (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976).

shall be deemed significant in any given situation. For those somewhat schooled by the sociology of knowledge, this should be obvious, but in hermeneutical theory a strong individualism seems to have obscured this insight.

In order to clarify the issue, we can refer to Hubert Dreyfus' article on Heidegger and Husserl in regard to the relationship between The world (Dreyfus calls it the "anyone") and My world.[14] He shows in this article that for Heidegger, the "anyone" public world (das Man) is prior to "my" or individual world. Even though Heidegger gives a detailed description of the manner in which the individual existing Dasein resolves to own up to his or her existence, Dreyfus says, "the fact remains that all significance is the product of the Anyone (das Man), so that authentic understanding can only take over the already given meanings in a more genuine way."[15] The following statement from Being and Time confirms the interpretation Dreyfus suggests:

> Authentic Being-one's-self does not rest upon an exceptional condition of the subject, a condition that has become detached from the "they," it is rather an existential modification of the "they"--of the "they" as an essential existentiale.[16]

This means not only that the publicness of Dasein is never relinquished but also that it is the "system of relations" of the "they" world which provides a "place" for Dasein's own utmost possibilities. If we follow Heidegger's proposal,

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[14]Hubert Dreyfus, "The Priority of The World to My World: Heidegger's Answer to Husserl (and Sartre)," Man and World 8 (May 1975):121-30.

[15]Ibid., p. 125. [16]Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 168.

then the public audience of a situation will be the place where the "tradition's" apperception of the "question" will reside.

Another reason for this conclusion is simply that if the audience is finally to understand the interpretation, then they must have some, however broken, pre-understanding of the what that is interpreted. Or in Lehmann's terms, if there is to be correct interpretation then there must be an apperception by those who would understand, namely, by the audience.

Perhaps we are saying no more than that interpretation is essentially a communal affair. Of course, we must then face the consequences: namely, to the degree that community is broken or destroyed, interpretation becomes an increasingly difficult task. Since our current situation, for the most part, can be characterized as experiencing a continual decline of any sense of community, the very possibility of interpretation appears to be in danger. However, this frustration does not legitimize dispensing with the audience, but rather should provoke further exploration of the problem.

The argument that the audience does bear the presuppositions for interpretation, and is the place of entry into the hermeneutical circle can be further supported if we look at the two other possibilities: the text and the interpreter.

The text presents fewer problems than the interpreter. As we saw in our discussion of Gadamer's hermeneutics, the text as a written document is basically alientated from tradition, and must be "awakened." This observation can be sharpened by Walter Ong's recent suggestion that "death inhibits texts"

and they must be "resurrected."[17] It is only through interpretation that the text "gives" something to the situation. It does not supply a motive for interpretation at the beginning.

The text, as a written document, is always in danger of separation from the apperception of the tradition to which it initially belonged, and which must be present again if the text is to be understood. In a real sense, as both Gadamer and Ricoeur have said, the text is the result of just this separation, although one could argue that the Biblical text has always belonged to a community, which in varying ways has maintained a tradition of apperception. We can address that question shortly in our discussion of particular and universal audiences. In any case, as a written document "present" in an interpretive situation by itself, it is an "interpretation" without apperception.

So the very "freedom" of the text from concrete situations and the "freedom" of any reader to read it (to the extent that they live in a literate world where reading is part of their life meaning) also entails a responsibility. Lionel Gossman states the character of the reader's freedom as follows: "The reader's freedom, however, places on him the responsibility for selecting a context in which to situate the text and finding a key to decipher it with."[18] To contextualize the text

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[17]Walter Ong, "Maranatha: Death and Life in the Text of the Book," Journal of the American Academy of Religion 16, 4 (1977):424f.

[18]Lionel Gossman, "Literacy Education and Democracy,"

is not simply to decipher its meaning and then to "apply" it to a situation, but rather to create a context where the possibility of it meaning anything at all comes into being. Does this not refer us back to the listeners? Is not the existence of hearers, or persons for whom one interprets, the "key" to discover the meaning of a text? Meaning arises from the confrontation between the audience and the text, since the interpreter mediates a new understanding not simply of the text, but also of the audience's constructed reality. In other words, the confrontation, in its most fundamental sense, is not over what the text by itself "means," but rather what the apperceived "issue" of the situation "means." And this is initially perceived by the audience, although it may well be transformed through interpretation.

When we turn to the interpreter, the picture becomes more complicated because the history of interpretation easily gets confused with the history of interpreters. Since interpreters rather than audiences write books, when one surveys the history of interpretation, it may appear that is is only a succession of interpreters. Is not this an instance of confusing literature and life, rather than discerning their interrelatedness?

At a more fundamental level, interpretation is a profound human activity whose past is ever present in the effort of contemporary men and women who take up this work. It is

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in Velocities of Change: Critical Essays from MLN (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), p. 24.

something like the history of painting which Merleau-Ponty has described as follows:

> It is the historicity that dwells in the painter at work, when in a single gesture, he binds the tradition he continues into a tradition he founds. It is the historicity which in a single stroke joins him with everything that has ever been painted in the world, without his having to leave either his place or time, or his blessed and accursed labor. The true history of painting is not one which puts painting in the past and then invokes superartists and fatalities--it is the history that puts everything in the present, that dwells in artists and reintegrates the painter with the fraternity of painters.[19]

To the degree that interpretation is an "art," Merleau-Ponty's description clarifies the historicity of interpreters. Not the results of interpretation, but rather the activity, the gesture of interpreting, is historical. But this gesture is toward and for others, and when it ceases to be so, it becomes something other than interpretation.

So, both the audience and the interpreter are significant historical subjects, but in the final analysis the interpreter, if he or she wants to be understood, can only be understood by a listener, and can only come to a self-understanding through the mediation of communal understanding.

Our thesis is that the audience is a co-constituent of interpretation, and the problems which the inclusion of the audience presents are problems which should be faced by a theory of interpretation. Although it is impossible to ad-

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[19]Maurice Merleau-Ponty, "The Indirect Language," in The Prose of the World, trans. John O'Neill (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973), p. 73.

dress all of these problems or even be aware of the full implications of this project, in the next chapter, the function of the audience will be further explored.

CHAPTER II

THE AUDIENCE IN THE INTERPRETIVE SITUATION

Although recent Biblical criticism and hermeneutics have not been particularly interested in audiences, one study by J. Arthur Baird on the synoptic gospels suggests that at least for the early New Testament hermeneuts or interpreters, the audience was extremely important. He noted the following about the synoptic gospels:

> One fact is inescapable. The Evangelists were intensely concerned to identify the audience that surrounded Jesus at any given moment. From the account of Jesus' entrance into Galilee until his ascension, Huck-Lietzmann's Synopsis divides the Synoptics into 422 separate units. In 395, or 94 percent, of these the audience is clearly designated by the editor. Within these units there are approximately 352 individual logia of Jesus, of which 98 percent are clearly identified as to audience. . . . It is as if attached to each logion as it came to the Gospel writer whether in oral or written form, was some indication of audience that was peculiarly important in the reporting of the tradition.[1]

Baird goes on to show how Jesus' "message" differed with different audiences. For example, while only 30 percent of the total of Jesus' logia on wrath were directed toward his disciples, 50 percent were directed toward his opponents. Also, 51 percent of his logia on love were given in the company of disciples, compared with only 12 percent before his opponents.[2]

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[1] J. Arthur Baird, Audience Criticism and the Historical Jesus (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1969), p. 32.

[2] Ibid., p. 114.

These findings of Baird's are interesting in themselves, but more importantly, they suggest that since the Evangelists and editors, our early hermeneutical predecessors, were so conscious of placing Jesus' sayings in perhaps invented audience situations, they were probably also aware of their own audiences. Does it not seem reasonable to suggest that contemporary interpreters might be as concerned with their audiences as were these predecessors?

Baird's study may also remind us of another aspect of the relationship between audiences and texts. In the interpretive situation, the interpreter is always faced with at least two audiences: the implied audience of the text, and the audience for whom he or she interprets. With the synoptics, there are three audiences: the audience identified by the Evangelists in their composition of the teachings of Jesus, that is the audience inside the text; the audience of the Evangelists themselves, or the implied audience; and the contemporary audience of the interpreter. This plurality of audiences presents an important problem for contemporary interpretive theory.

Besides this question concerning the text and interpreter's audiences, another issue bears directly upon current interpretive practice: the distinction between universal and particular audiences, which we introduced earlier in the section on the rhetorical situation. In this further exploration of audiences, we shall first take up the problem of the relationship between the text's and the interpreter's

audience and then consider the second issue of universal audiences for Biblical interpretation.

The Interpreter's Audience and the Text

We saw earlier that Ricoeur spoke of the text as "referring" to an audience, and then we suggested that the category of "reference" was really misplaced, and that a better concept would be that a text "implies" an audience, or that one "infers" from the text the author's "implied" audience. All audiences, both for writers and interpreters, are for the most part implied in what one says. In everyday conversation we do not consciously "refer" to whom we are speaking, but simply speak to them, and they infer from what we say whether or not we know them. Or if I read an essay which argues that scientists are imaginative and come across a statement such as "Not only are poets imaginative, but so are scientists," then I can infer that the author's implied audience believes that poets are imaginative. This is a common type of rhetorical analysis of a text, and is applicable to most texts in varying degrees. So, we can say that most texts have an implied audience, and the implied audiences of the various books of the New Testament, needless to say, are very diverse, but none of them is the same as the contemporary interpreter's audience, and this difference is what needs to be discussed.

In regard to the author's implied audience, Wayne Booth made the following comment:

> The author creates, in short, an image of himself and another image of his reader, he makes his reader as he makes his second self, and the most successful reading

> is one in which the created selves, author and reader, can find complete agreement.[3]

When we begin to examine the Biblical texts, it is possible to discover with some degree of accuracy the "created selves" of the writer: for example Paul's Letter to the Galatians is addressed to a different audience than the Letter to the Church in Corinth. Furthermore, a different audience situation is implied: the Corinthian Letter tends more toward an epideictic mode and the Galatian Letter toward a forensic one.[4] Besides these various textual audiences, through the process of canonization the Letters of Paul became incorporated into a "book" which had its own audience, namely, that of the post-canonical churches.

Now we have seen that through the process of writing, texts became "free" from these audience-situations, in the sense that texts survive the passage of time. However, the text still has an "implied audience" which, if one would take the time to analyze the text, would imply conditions and modes of thought of the original audience. At the same time, the interpreter's audience, as is obvious from our common sense of things, is not under the same conditions and does not employ the same modes of thought. At least the two audiences

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[3]Wayne Booth, Rhetoric of Fiction (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1966), p. 138.

[4]For an analysis of the epideictic mode in the Letter to the Corinthians, see Wilhelm Wuellner, "Methodological Considerations Concerning the Rhetorical Genre of First Corinthians" (unpublished), and Hans-Dieter Betz, "The Literary Composition and Function of Paul's Letter to the Galatians," New Testament Studies 21 (1975):353-79.

are not identical.

Of course with a little imagination and a lot of disregard for the contemporary world, it is possible to place one's self in the supposed state of the "original" audience. At least this possibility is not to be totally ignored. In fact, in most urban areas, we find people who appear to have returned to former times and "live-in" a world created by texts. As in the Platonic myth of the cave, persons are drawn out of their everyday world into the bright light of the world-of-the-text. Perhaps the best response, or at least the quickest, is St. Paul's: "all things are possible, but not all things are helpful."

However, it is really impossible to pass over this otherworldly use of texts so quickly. In fact, this use of Biblical texts is widespread, especially in religious institutions. In order to understand it, we need to identify the contemporary audience for whom the interpretation is performed. In a perhaps unrepresentative statement for Martin Luther, but representative of this use of scripture, he gives the following instructions for preaching:

> Since, therefore, we do not have actual sufferings and afflictions in our time, it is extremely necessary that we at least inflict them on ourselves in our thinking, so that we might be the kind of people on whom God would have mercy and whom He would save. . . . But this must be done not only with the attitude of hope and love, so that, just as no one can worthily pray the prayers of affliction unless, as I said above, he goes down to death and hell, so, on the contrary, no one can worthily and joyfully speak praises, unless he ascends to heaven with the attitude of hope and, as intensely as he can, think of himself as being in fact already in the midst of the angels and

saints.[5]

Now for certain audiences, namely those engaged in a ritualistic re-enactment of the Gospel story, or what in rhetorical categories would fall under the rubric of epideictic oratory, this type of "interpretation" would have its place.

Similarly, Bultmann's program of demythologizing, which might not be appropriate for an epideictic speech, or a "religious" ceremony, would be appropriate for an audience deliberating on how to discover what it means to be an existing human being in a modern world created and sustained by God.

In fact, once we become conscious of different contemporary audience-situations, it is possible to make sense of many interpretive practices which could never be included in a hermeneutical theory that ignored the audience component of interpretation. At the same time, as we shall see more clearly when we come to the issue of universal and particular audiences, to make the ritualistic audience paradigmatic for interpretation is to forfeit the possibility of continuing the conversation between texts and everyday life, which, especially for the Bible, represents its original context.

More significantly, this type of interpretation reverses the whole interpretive process. If, as we have suggested, interpretation lives in the on-going conversation between text and situation, which is the present horizon of the history

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[5]Martin Luther, Luther Works, vol. 10: First Psalm Lectures (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1974), p. 374. See Dockhorn's comments on Luther's theory of affects in his review of Gadamer's Wahreit und Methode, in Goettingische Gelehrte Anzeigen 3-4 (1966):179.

of interpretation, and furthermore if Biblical interpretation follows the Biblical apperception of what is going on in a situation, then the apperception of the situation precedes interpretation. Or, in language we used earlier, the question or exigence of the situation is what elicits speaking and interpretation rather than the text itself. If we begin with the text we are likely to end there, in a gnostic, otherworldly, world-of-the-text. If we begin with the situation we are likely to end there, in the effort of understanding and action, following our own possibilities as they become illuminated, shaped, and transformed by the interpretation of the situation through the text.

The decisive difference between the interpreter's audience and the audience of the text arises from the question or exigence of the situation which elicits the task of interpretation. Of course, this difference is not absolute. Just as there is a history of interpretation in terms of the "effort" of interpretation, so is there also a history of hearing or listening, but this is based not upon the simple repetition of a particular implied audience of the text, but rather upon the repetition of the inclusion of the audience in one's interpretation, given the text and the particular doxa with which one interprets.

The problem of the relationship between the text's implied audience and the interpreter's audience can be clarified by briefly looking at the passion story in the Gospel of Luke. Recent scholarship has reached some agreement that the

Gospel's audience was primarily Gentile, and at least indirectly, the Roman authorities. This helps to show the author's intention of removing blame for Jesus' execution from the Romans and placing it in the Jewish community.[6] Furthermore, the early Christian proselytizing among the Jewish "God-fearers" also contributed to a sharp conflict between them and the Christians, which made them an advantageous source for the plot to execute Jesus. Given this situation, the writer's couching of the fact that Jesus was executed as a political rebel in the conspiracy of the Jewish hierarchy tends to cover-up the political aspects of Jesus' work, all of which we can understand as a response to the question of the early church's survival after the destruction of Jerusalem. This Biblical "interpretation" of the trial and execution of Jesus, and the general anti-Jewish intentions of the Gospels and the Book of Acts, can be understood today as a strategy to appeal to the Roman audiences and to the Gentiles who were attracted by Jewish religion, but surely it cannot be simply repeated today. Contemporary audiences, who have been informed and reformed by the events of the twentieth century cannot "repeat" the political and religious circumstances of the first and second centuries. Must we not assume that when one interprets the Passion story today, the interpreter's audience includes

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[6]The apologetic intention in the Passion story has been recognized by contemporary Biblical criticism. Two recent studies from quite different starting points are William R. Wilson, The Execution of Jesus (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1970), and S. A. F. Brandon, Jesus and the Zealots (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1967). It should, however, be noted that this issue remains controversial.

Jewish survivors of the holocaust? The "tradition" of audiences cannot be taken lightly.

This is one case, and an exemplary one, where the reality of history informs and shapes the construction of one's contemporary audience. It not only shows us how the history of audiences functions as a criterion for valid interpretations, but also suggests that through a study of the history of audiences we could see how certain interpretive processes have worked in the past, what their consequences were, and what kind of practices resulted from these audience constructions.[7] Although such an analysis will not show us what the correct "construction" of an audience is for our present task of interpretation, it could show us some dangers that lie in certain possibilities, and how the very "audience" that we address belongs to the history of interpretation.

The audience, however, has not only a "past" but also a future, and its future must be taken equally into account. As we have seen in our earlier discussion of the "horizon" of the present, understanding itself is fundamentally futuristic. The fore-structure of audiences is really the key to interpreting texts so that understanding happens. Furthermore, and this is the point we want to make here, the apperception of the "project" of the audience enables a new understanding even of the text.

For example, the recent interest and development of a

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[7] See Robert M. Adams, "The Sense of Verification: Pragmatic Commonplaces about Literary Criticism," in Daedalus: Myth, Symbol, and Culture (Winter 1972):206-7.

feminist theology, I suggest, is not due only to the slight increase in women interpreters, but also due to the recognition of women as a significant "audience." Significant not merely as passive recipients but as persons engaged in a project, in a "becoming" which reflects upon the personal, social, and ontological dimensions of human existence. Letty Russell describes the situation thusly:

> The Bible was written in a patriarchal culture in which the father was supreme in clan, family, and nation, and wives and children were legally dependent. The interpretation and translation of the Bible through the centuries has been carried out in societies and Christian communities that were male-centered or androcentric. Just as non-Western cultures must seek to liberate the white, Western interpretations of Scripture and theology so that they are heard anew in different cultures and subcultures, women must seek to liberate the interpretation of God's Word from male bias.[8]

In other words, given the "audience" as persons who are on "their journey toward freedom,"[9] the task of interpretation entails a "reading" of the text which incorporates this audience. The result is not only a clear awareness that contemporary audiences differ from textual audiences, but also a new understanding of the meaning of the text. Lehmann expressed this productivity of the dialogue between the situation and the text as follows:

> The text illuminates in a particular way certain attempts to understand the situation, and the situation brings somehow fresh vitality and enlargement of horizon to the text which one never really knew before.[10]

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[8]Letty M. Russell, "Introduction: The Liberating Word," in The Liberating Word: A Guide to Nonsexist Interpretation of the Bible, ed. Letty M. Russell (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1967), p. 15.

[9]Ibid. [10]Brown, p. 3.

Feminist theology is a particularly good example for demonstrating the inadequacy of E. D. Hirsch's rendering of Gadamer's notion of pre-understanding or prejudices.[11] Hirsch's separation of "meaning" and "significance" into what the author meant and what the author's utterance means to the interpreter, or the present situation, assumes not only that the situation's horizon (he never includes the interpreter's audience) has nothing to do with the "meaning" of a text, but furthermore, that the history of interpretation is inconsequential for what a text means. "The historicity of interpretation is quite distinct from the timelessness of understanding."[12] However, Hirsch's theory cannot adequately explain the new understandings of texts, such as we have shown in the examples of the apologetic aspect of the Passion story, and the even more recent disclosing of the attempts on the parts of the evangelists and editors to de-emphasize the partnership which Jesus established with women. These discoveries have to do with understanding the "author's intention" which is precisely what Hirsch contends is "timeless"! More importantly, Hirsch's non-historical approach to understanding leads him to label the notion of pre-understanding a "guess" which results in a trivialization of interpretation.[13]

Not only must the interpreter be concerned with the "intention" of the author as one aspect of the text, but also

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[11] E. D. Hirsch, Jr., Validity in Interpretation (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), p. 261.

[12] Ibid., p. 137. [13] Ibid., p. 261.

with the "project" of the audience for whom one interprets, as well as his or her own intentions. It is in the interweaving and interwovenness of these different projects that "meaning" occurs. If interpretation theory is to be adequate for its task, then it must become conscious that the interpreter's audience co-constitutes the "meaning" of a text.

Such an audience is not the same as the audience of the text's author because of the history of interpretation (the past) which has brought us as an interpreting community to the present, but also for the sake of the project (the future) in which the interpreter's audience is engaged. The character of the interpreter's audience can be further explored by turning to the problem of universal audiences.

Universal and Particular Audiences

Briefly restating Perelman's distinction between universal and particular audiences: Universal audiences are based upon agreements as to the real, while particular audiences refer to agreements as to the preferable. When we turn to scriptural interpretation, we find that the usual assumption, and the assumption within the text itself, is that the audience is universal. (See, for example, Colossians 1:15f.)

At the same time, to the observer of the practice of Biblical interpretation, it may appear that the implied audience is particular. Those who prefer religious answers or are in need of consolation might be possible audiences whose particular agreements could serve as a basis for interpretation. Since being "religious" or practicing a specific type

of religiousity has become for the most part a "private matter," should not the audience be understood as particular?

On the other hand if we were to review modern Biblical hermeneutics and theology from this perspective, we would see a continuing struggle to re-establish a universal audience for Biblical interpretation. Bultmann's program of demythologizing and existential interpretation can be seen in this light. Accepting the universal agreements as to the nature of the cosmos, he demythologized (interpreted) Biblical myth so that these agreements would not be denied. Furthermore, his construction of his audience as persons concerned with their existence appealed to "universal agreements" as to what matters for all human beings.

Even more than Bultmann, Dietrich Bonhoeffer sought to bring Bibilical interpretation out of the private audiences of those who preferred religion to the universal agreements of persons in contemporary life. Especially in his prison letters, his thesis of the end of religion comes to explicit expression: "The time when men could be told everything by means of words, whether theological or simply pious, is over, and so is the time of inwardness and conscience; which is to say the time of religion as such."[14]

Although Bonhoeffer never spoke directly of "audiences," his analysis is so pertinent for our discussion, that the following remarks should be quoted and reflected upon:

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[14]Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Letters and Papers from Prison, trans. Reginald Fuller (New York: Macmillan Co., 1962), p. 162.

> The attack by Christian apologetic upon the adulthood of the world I consider to be in the first place pointless, in the second ignoble, and in the third un-Christian. Pointless, because it looks to me like an attempt to put a grown-up man back into adolescence, i.e. to make him dependent on things on which he is not in fact dependent any more, thrusting him back into the midst of problems which are in fact not problems for him any more. Ignoble, because this amounts to an effort to exploit the weakness of man for purposes alien to him and not freely subscribed to by him. Un-Christian, because for Christ himself is being substituted one particular stage in the religiousness of man, i.e. a human law.[15]

Is this not an attempt to discover the audience for the Biblical text? For the Biblical interpreter to construct an "audience" like the one constructed by earlier interpreters is not only to disregard the contemporary audience, but also the intent of the text. As an alternative, Bonhoeffer suggests a "worldly interpretation" which he never fully worked out but for which he did show us a possibility.[16] "I should like to speak of God not on the borders of life, but at its centre, not in weakness but in strength, not, therefore, in man's suffering and death but in his life and prosperity."[17]

The direction Bonhoeffer suggests is to move toward the strengths of the common world, where the debate about the "real" takes place, and there to engage in an interpretation for these audiences.[18]

Once one begins to accept such an audience, the actual interpretations that follow, not only of the text but also of the situation, are really beyond the scope of this discussion, but with Bonhoeffer there is such a close relationship between

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[15] Ibid., pp. 196-7.

[16] Ibid., p. 220.

[17] Ibid., pp. 165-6.

[18] Ibid., p. 239.

hermeneutics and theology, as one would expect, that it is helpful to mention his Christological thesis. In his Ethics, he expressed it thusly:

> In Christ there was re-created the form of man before God. It was not an outcome of the place or the time, or the climate or the race, or the individual or the society, or of religion, or of taste, but quite simply the life of mankind as such, that mankind at this point recognized its image and its hope. What befell Christ had befallen mankind. It is a mystery, for which there is no explanation, that only a part of mankind recognizes the form of their redeemer. The longing of the Incarnate to take form in all men is as yet still unsatisfied.[19]

It is the presence of Christ, the Christ for others, which is already there to be acknowledged in the world. For Bonhoeffer, the question of the real and the question of who is Christ today are the same question. This means, however, that the interpreter must know something about the assumptions and aspirations, experiences and perceptions of those for whom he or she would interpret, because, as Bonheoffer also said, "one has to live in a parish for a long time to see how Christ is 'being formed' in it."[20]

Since "worldly interpretation" of scriptures assumes a universal audience, it would appear that the investigation of the ways in which this audience interprets experiences would be helpful for the task of interpretation. At this point, we can refer to our previous discussion of rhetorical topics, which can be used to articulate the ways people structure

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[19]Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Ethics, trans. Neville Horton Smith (New York: Macmillan Company, 1955), p. 83.

[20]Letters, p. 217.

experience and relate experiences, ideas, and objects. To include the general topics in one's interpretation does not mean that they will not be refuted or changed, but it does mean that one will begin to understand how listeners most likely will respond to situations.

If Biblical interpretation accepts the premise that its proper audience is not religious or any other particular audience, but rather the audience composed by the agreements of everyday life, and if we also remember again that "audience" is a construction that approximates actual conditions, we are still left with a serious problem: the actual existence of such agreements in contemporary Western culture are difficult to discern.

Given the plurality and the rapid change of our society, and the continuance of inequality, for the white male community to speak of universal audiences is difficult indeed. If we keep this in mind, then we will also be reminded that the "universal" audience to which the interpreter will appeal cannot be made in our own image, but must be constructed through the forces and pressures which indeed do reveal the commonness that makes sense. Interpretation must have a sense of this commonness if its work is to be effective.

If Biblical interpretation were to move in this direction then it would finally move out of the false subjectivity and spiritualism which presently confine it to the private world. What Merleau-Ponty has said of philosophy is no less true for Biblical interpretation:

> The fact that we die alone does not imply that we live alone; and if we consult nothing but suffering and death when we are defining subjectivity, subjective life with others and in the world will become logically impossible. On the other hand, we cannot legitimately consider ourselves instruments of a soul of the world, group, or couple. We must conceive of a primordial We (On) that has its own authenticity and furthermore never ceases but continues to uphold the greatest passions of our adult life and to be experienced anew in each of our perceptions.[21]

This "primordial We" is the presupposition for any attempt to appeal to a common audience which even though it only tacitly exists can become manifest on the level of interpretation as an attempt to de-privatize life and language and revitalize a public sensibility. John O'Neill's description of the task of the political and sociological imagination is instructive for the Biblical interpreter:

> It is the task of the political and sociological imagination to conceive of men's private troubles in the contexts of public concern and to furnish bridging concepts which will enable individuals to translate their private uneasiness into public speech and political action. It must undertake to shift the contexts of freedom, equality, and reason away from the private sector and out of the household into a public domain which will constitute a genuine common world.[22]

In other words, there is the task of constructing a universal audience that is public and approximates the problematic of contemporary life. Rhetoric, as a discipline, almost naturally moves in this direction. Karl Wallace has said of the rhetorician:

> The rhetorician looks at the things and experience that men share in common, at the interests and problems of

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[21] Signs, p. 175.

[22] John O'Neill, Sociology as a Skin Trade: Essays Toward a Reflective Sociology (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), p. 37.

> society in general . . . he focuses upon that speech and language behavior that reflects the communal experience to which men become subject and to which men appeal in deliberating upon their mutual problems, in coming to decisions mutually acceptable to them, and in appraising their decisions and actions.[23]

However, Wallace admits that with the decline of rhetoric in the modern period, and the absence of any perspective which has really nurtured the common world, rhetoric itself is prone to forfeit this responsibility. In any case, he suggests the following: "I suggest that rhetoricians in the next decades can make their greatest contribution to the general welfare of the free and open society by acting as educators essential to the development of the public self of the individual."[24] Karl-Otto Apel suggests much of the same strategy for the Humanities.

> I would think, all our historical research, all our study of past ages and foreign cultures ought to contribute its results to the shaping and reshaping of an educated public opinion. I cannot imagine that this function of the Humanities could be replaced at any time by reducing understanding and interpretation to the method of objectifying science, as is suggested by positivism; on the contrary, I am inclined to think that the need for intersubjective understanding in the narrow sense as well as in the broad sense of goal-orientation will grow in direct proportion to the growth of science and technology as primary productive forces of modern industrial society.[25]

Biblical interpretation, and the discipline of hermeneutics, share this task with rhetoric and the other humanities.

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[23]Karl Wallace, "The Fundamentals of Rhetoric," in The Prospect of Rhetoric, p. 6.

[24]Ibid., p. 9.

[25]Karl-Otto Apel, "Communication and the Foundations of the Humanities," Acta Sociologia 15, 1 (1972):23.

In fact, the very future of interpretation in any situation other than in small private worlds depends upon the nature of this public sphere, and its nurture will take place through our interpretive activity. However, this is not to say that one can ignore particular audiences. Rather it suggests that even in the interpretation for particular audiences, the common world is encouraged and increasingly realized. This entails for the interpreter a more conscious search for "the available means of persuasion," to use Aristotle's phrase, within particular situations, which in fact do move beyond the preferences of particular groups.

So the distinction between particular and universal audiences should not become absolute, and, above all, the "universal" audience should not become an abstraction. Rather, our situation currently imposes upon us a fact that most of our audiences will be particular. However, the task suggested here is that these audience-situations can become open to the constitution of a "public" world, where the question of the "real" comes into contact with the vocation of humanity.

The means of doing this will be varied and diverse. For example, the interpreter may construct a pluralistic audience by incorporating both private and public agreements, and may even use the various agreements of private audiences to forge a public world. Or, some private audiences may embody a new public consensus, or at least indicate what the public agreements would be like, even if they do not

necessarily constitute a majority. In fact, public agreements, as we are using the term, has very little to do with majority rule, but rather with the common aspects of human, social life. For example, feminist groups may appear as a private audience, and foster agreements that are peculiar to women. At the same time, their agreements may, and I think they do, indicate what the "public" agreements should be, and what now constitutes a universal audience. In a sense, such groups are signs of universal agreements, which the work of interpretation may incorporate into its own effort. That an interpreter chooses to honor such signs is not simply his or her own individual choice, but rather belongs to the task of Biblical interpretation. By moving into the context of texts and audiences, the interpreter has the task of discerning the audience configurations which enable interpretation. What this concretely entails in specific situations will differ greatly, but if the possibility of the construction of a public, common audience is ignored from the beginning, then the universal intention of the Biblical tradition simply is denied through default.

From the perspective of the "universal" audience that we have now developed, a valid interpretation would be one which facilitates the sensibility necessary for the development and maintenance of the common. The "objectivity" of such interpretation finally resides in the practices it encourages or proposes, and the future that is thereby opened for the "people." In this situation, the "meaning" of a

text is interwoven with the meaning that happens in the total interpretive situation, and the vocation that situation receives from the conversation between itself and the text.

CHAPTER III

THE TASK OF INTERPRETATION

Assuming the description of the audience's place and function in the interpretive situation we have presented, it is now possible to address the question of what interpretation entails. In our earlier discussion of modern hermeneutics, two distinct and yet related aspects of understanding appeared crucial for a complete comprehension of what constitutes understanding. Understanding as acknowledgement reveals the encounter-decision aspect of understanding, while understanding as integration shows it to be communal and historic. The task of interpretation, therefore, can be seen as the creation of a common language between the text and a situation, which brings about the acknowledgement of what is interpreted.

For our purposes, Gadamer's description of interpretation may serve as a starting point. For him, as we saw before, interpretation entails the creation of the horizon of the text which then is de-constructed through the "fusion" of horizons. Furthermore, for Gadamer, this "fusion" should not be placed under the rubric of human effort, but rather under the rubric of the nature of language. In our discussion, Gadamer's scheme will be extended in the following manner.

First of all, through the integration of hermeneutical and rhetorical perspectives, it should be clear that the

"construction" applies not only to the text's horizon, but also to the audience's horizon. By including the audience in the interpretive situation, it becomes subjected to analysis as does the text.

Secondly, whereas in Gadamer, the "fusion" of horizons was described through the use of metaphor,[1] we will extend this perspective to include other tropes as well, such as the metyonomy, and thereby offer a broader description of what "fusion" entails.

Finally, although Gadamer's emphasis upon the onotological power of language represents an adequate philosophical perspective of how understanding happens, it is also important for this perspective not to prevent a description of what persons do when interpreting. Theologically, one could say that the understanding "happens" through the power of God's Word, but this is no excuse for not being responsible for doing interpretation, even though this "doing" is not the same as what "happens." So, the doing will receive more attention here, but not without a recognition of its limits, and an awareness that its fulfillment does not depend upon itself, but rather upon the total vocational and linguistic context of the interpretive situation.

Bringing these different aspects together, we see a loosely formulated three-fold interpretive scheme, which can be understood as the (1) contextual, (2) tropical, and the (3) eschatological. Although it is possible to treat these

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[1] Truth and Method, pp. 390f.

consecutively, they are intimately interwoven and represent a multi-dimensionality of language and life, which itself provides occasions for surprises and new beginnings.

The introduction of "folds" in interpretation reminds one of the "four-fold" method of interpretation which was employed for over a thousand years in the Biblical tradition, and although it is impossible to repeat its results, there may be some value in repeating its effort. A famous verse depicting the four "fold" went as follows:

> Littera gesta docet, quid credas allegoria
> Moralis quid agas, quo tendas anagogia.
>
> [The letter shows us what God and our father did;
> The allegory shows us where our faith is hid;
> The moral meaning gives us rules of daily life;
> The anagogy shows us where we end our strife.][2]

As we know, this four-fold method has not been held in high esteen since the beginning of the modern period, when scientific literalism not only placed language under the control of things, but also developed, in consortium with a general cultural movement, what has been called the "one-dimensional man."[3] By remembering this interpretive practice, at least we can see an alternative to this one-dimensionality.

The four-fold scheme was not simply an approach to scripture, but also reflected and was dependent upon an approach to the world. For the most part, its "home" was a

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[2]Quoted in Robert Grant, The Bible in the Church: A Short History of Interpretation (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1948), p. 101.

[3]Herbert Marcuse, One-Dimensional Man (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968).

curious combination of incarnational theology and Platonic cosmology. Marcia Colish's study of four major figures of this "world," Augustine, Anselm, Aquinas, and Dante, shows how they assumed the existence of relational analogues between scripture and the world.

> For the thinkers here studied, the primary objects of knowledge are God, and, to a lesser extent, man and the universe seen in a God-related perspective. The principal signs of God, in a literal sense, are the verbal testimonies of teachers of the Word, whether they be scriptural writers, preachers, theologians, or poets. In a figurative sense the principal sign of God is the creation, and above all the human soul, in which vestiges of the Trinity have been impressed.[4]

The "world" itself was seen as a book, which could be read through figurative interpretation. Writing in the twelfth century, Hugh of St. Victor put it this way:

> For the whole visible world is a book written by the finger of God, that is, created by divine power; and individual creatures are as figures therein not devised by human will but instituted by divine authority to show forth the wisdom of the invisible things of God. But just as some illiterate man who sees an open book looks at the figures but does not recognize the letters; just so the foolish man who does not perceive the things of God sees outwardly in these visible creatures the appearances but does not inwardly understand the reason. But he who is spiritual and can judge all things, while he considers outwardly the beauty of the work inwardly conceives how marvellous is the wisdom of the Creator.[5]

Gabriel Josipovici, in his study of The World and the Book, has described so well what has happened to the optimistic assumptions of the medieval interpreters that it will be ad-

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[4]Marcia Colish, The Mirror of Language: A Study of the Medieval Theory of Knowledge (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), p. 344.

[5]Quoted in Gabriel Josipovici, The World and the Book (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1971), p. 29.

vantageous to quote him at length:

> In the twelfth century Hugh of St. Victor had been able to talk about the visible world as a "book written by the finger of God," and of men as "instituted by divine authority to show forth the wisdom of the invisible things of God." But events were so to shake this faith that by the end of the sixteenth century Montaigne could write: "We no longer know what things are really like, for nothing comes to us except falsified and altered by our senses. . . . The uncertainty of our senses renders uncertain all that they produce." In such a world the discovery of truth is the prerogative of the scientist who measures rather than of the artist who sees. Whether when it has been found, this truth is of any value, is a question that will occasionally be asked in the following centuries. The great majority of thinkers and artists of the time, however, prefer to ignore it, and turn with tremendous gusto to the attack of their immediate predecessors. In the course of this attack the last vestiges of the medieval analogical system are destroyed, and a new world emerges--our world.[6]

As long as one places Biblical interpretation solely within a cosmological framework, and treats interpretation only as an epistemological problem, a new formulation of interpretation which looks at the four-fold method as its predecessor would probably be of little help. However, if we move, as modern hermeneutics has done, to an historical framework, and extend it to include the socio-political world, then such a method suggests not only an interpretive possibility, but perhaps even a remedy for the literalist fallacy. It frees the interpreter to see a plurality of approaches and a dimensionality in responses.

This shift from cosmology to history should not be taken as a negative view of the natural world. It is obvious today that the natural world has a "history," too, and reflects the

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[6]Ibid., p. 51.

history of humans. The life of nature abides with the life of humans, and the full humanization of human life entails a respect for life as a whole, including the natural life.

An important question for the contemporary interpreter in regard to a strategy which involves multiple dimensions is whether or not the audience is able to "hear" the texture of language and life it assumes. We all know the experience of using irony or telling jokes which were not understood. In order for such uses of language to be effective, the context of the situation, and the expectations of the listeners, make a significant difference. So, when we turn to the first "fold," contextual interpretation, it will be necessary to take up this issue.

Contextual Interpretation

If the audience is to be a co-constituent of interpretation, it is necessary that one has some notion of their expectations, and the expectations of their total communicative situation. In traditional rhetorical categories, the emotions of the audience, or its disposition or state-of-mind, is what is at issue here. In my own work with this question, I have developed a communication exercise which has helped various groups (mostly students and professional groups) to discover the various communicative expectations in the different "language-worlds" of their everyday life. Through the use of seven different categories of interpretation, they have been able to evaluate different everyday situations by looking at the practice of communication in these situations.

The participants were asked first to list ten different "communicants" which represented the "worlds" in which they lived, and then to evaluate them with the following seven categories:

1. Equality of communicants
2. Dimensions of meaning
3. Mutuality of participation
4. Degree of attachment
5. Orality
6. Purpose of communication
7. Range of topics

The equality of communicants refers to the social status of the communicants. At one extreme is the hierarchical relationship and at the other equal status. The second category, the dimensions of meaning, assesses the communication situation in terms of whether utterances may express more than one meaning. For example, some modes of discourse, such as riddles, stories, and jokes, to name a few, are dependent upon situations in which a multi-dimensional apprehension of meaning is possible. On the other hand, in much bureaucratic and technological communication, a literalism dominates. For interpretation, this category is especially significant, for it is precisely the plurality of meaning which usually needs to be appreciated in order to interpret texts. The third category concerns the degree to which communicants are able to interact with each other in the communication. This would range from passive listeners on the one hand, to a mutual quest in dialogue on the other. It would also show the degree of openness on the part of the communicants to new understandings. The "degree of attachment" is largely self-explanatory,

and yet very important. The question here is the degree to which the communicants are personally involved in what is said. The next category, orality, has to do with the distinction between oral and written communication. In the study of comparative culture, as well as the history of Western culture, there have been significant differences observed between oral and written communication, but it seems that the different "traditions" exist in contemporary society as well. For example, in the world of paper, whether in executive suites or academic halls, people tend to talk to each other as they write memos. Perhaps one of the most "visible" strains of written culture is the structuralist movement in literary criticism, which through diagrams and sets of relations, wishes to "see" how language works, rather than "hear" it. On the other hand, most of us live with family or friends in an oral tradition, where much can be said in a few words. The history of being together allows stories to be told and retold, and utterances carry with them the corporate memory of the group.

The sixth category refers to the alternate possibilities of speaking for the purpose of establishing relationships or for the purpose of giving information. Of course, much discourse is for both, and yet in the current society, many have found a wide range of divergence as to the expectations in different communication situations.

Finally, the seventh category, the range of topics, refers simply to the number of topics or subject matters

which are appropriate to "bring up" in a particular situation. Probably, the most widely known advice on this matter is that politics and religion are not to be talked about at dinner.

Not only are these various interpretations significant in themselves as telling us something about what situations encourage and discourage, but also when they are related to each other, more comprehensive patterns begin to emerge. For example, when a communication relationship is seen as hierarchal, it makes a great amount of difference if one is above or below. Those above will tend to see a greater possibility for multi-dimensional communication, while those below tend to see the communication more one-dimensionally. As one would expect, this sociological category of equality overshadows some other linguistic categories. Or to give one more example, if the purpose of the communication is to establish relationships but the communicative expectations are literal, it was seen as difficult to bring into the situation the breadth and depth of human relations. Although other observations were made with particular responses, the most significant finding was that most of us do live in different communicative situations and some of these are seen as multi-dimensional.

These kinds of experiences are common for many of us who live in our modern, highly industrialized culture, and must be taken into account if understanding is to become a real possibility. At the same time, what is expected is not the same as what "can" happen. It is through the discernment of these expectations, however, that one obtains the basis

for allowing the "can" to exceed the "expected."

Besides these expectations which could be placed under the rubric of linguistic "moods," there are also customary ways in which audiences structure experiences, and the assumptions they use in the perception and formation of an "issue" in a situation.

For example, one set of prevalent topics currently used, which basically are economic but are used as general topics applicable to all fields, is the topic of investment and return. In the case of interpreting Biblical texts, this topic encourages a structure of relations which might not approximate the intent of the interpretation at all. If the Biblical topic of "promise and fulfillment" is construed by the listeners through such economic categories of interpretation, then it may well function to secure the coffers, but not the future.

On the other hand, the analysis of the common topics does not always lead to their refutation, but they may also be employed. For example, Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech effectively used the topic of a "bad check."[7] However one decides to confront the topics of the audiences, it is important to take them into account, because they function as the "interpretive screen" of the listeners. The analysis of these topics is therefore an important part of contextual analysis. Not only does the discernment of them enable one to assess their significance for interpretation, but also they

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[7]Martin Luther King, Jr., "I Have a Dream," in The Voice of Black Rhetoric, ed. Arthur L. Smith and Stephen Robb (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1971), p. 184.

can provide a realistic critique for the audience "construction" which the interpreter creates.

The significance of the contextual analysis of the audience-situation can be further developed through the interpretation of the text, as the text's context begins to illuminate the current situation. Contextual interpretation involves not only the situation, but also the text.

Contextual interpretation of the text is directed by the question how this text as a "unit of communication" functions in a particular situation. Especially since the advent of form-criticism, followed by redaction criticism, transmission, and canonical criticism, modern Biblical scholarship has supplied the Biblical interpreter with a wealth of information about the function of the text in its historical context and about the interpretive practices in the transmission of the various units within the canon.

One peculiar aspect of contemporary Biblical criticism is its close parallel with the kind of textual criticism currently employed in rhetorical studies. Koch, in a presentation of the development of form-criticism, which was largely developed by Bultmann and Dibelius, gives the following description of its method:

> Form criticism is only a few decades old, but already it has made its impact; no biblical text can be adequately understood without a consideration of the setting in life of its literary type. And vice versa; no way of life in ancient Israel and in the early Christian community can be exhaustively detailed without a thorough study of all literary types relating to it. To establish the setting in life of a text the following questions must be posed: "Who is speaking?" "Who is listening?" "What is the prevailing mood?"

> "What effect is sought?" Although the period of time which has elapsed and the scarcity of material which has survived does not always make it possible to determine actual origins of biblical literary forms, this does not detract from the necessity of such a study.[8]

These questions--"Who is speaking?" "Who is listening?" "What is the prevailing mood?" "What effect is sought?"--facilitate the construction of the "world" in which the text functioned as a "unit of communication." They create the horizon of the text, which differs radically from, and yet also potentially relates to, the tradition it has continued to nurture. Such criticism is one important aspect of contextual interpretation of the text.

The second aspect of current Biblical scholarship is its exploration of the "interpretive" character of the Biblical text. For example, the major prophets were interpreters of the tradition of Israel as well as messengers of God. Or, better said, it was as interpreters that they presented God's message. Sanders puts it this way:

> The story of God's mighty acts in calling the fathers, freeing the Israelite slaves from Egypt, guiding them in the desert, and leading them into the land provided the frame of reference to the two central questions the prophets faced: How does God act and how should the people act.[9]

However, placing the prophets in an interpretive tradition does not mean that they were simply saying the same thing as of old. Just the opposite. It was the new interpretation

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[8]Klaus Koch, The Growth of the Biblical Tradition: The Form-Critical Method, trans. S. M. Cupitt (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1969), p. 33.

[9]James Sanders, Torah and Canon (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974), p. 56.

of the old which distinguished the true from the false prophets.

> The difference was that the official theologians employed a hermeneutic of continuity, while the canonical prophets (the "true" prophets whose books we inherit) employed an existentialist hermeneutic which stressed neither continuity nor discontinuity but rather, on the basis of the Torah, raised the probing question as to Israel's true identity.[10]

As Sanders further points out, during their time of prophecy, the "true" prophets were taken as false, and vice versa. It was during the Babylonian captivity, when the first canon was probably created, that the Israelites discovered the "truth." In their situation, separated from their land, without a kingdom or a temple, they discerned that Jeremiah, not Hananiah, was right. In other words, it was the Babylonian situation, and the demands of that situation, which allowed the compilers and editors to interpret the prophets correctly, and thereby to interpret their own situation.

The discovery that the Bible itself is a record of interpretation, rather than simply a record of "historical fact" should be an aid to those who are currently involved in the task of interpretation. In retrospect, what can be construed as "tradition," as Sanders has pointed out, should not be seen as a type of simple continuity. Rather, it is a "tradition" of interpreting the "subject matter," that is, the Torah.

This notion of interpretive tradition is profoundly applicable to the New Testament. Jesus' proclamation of the presence of the Kingdom of God, and the early church's claim

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[10]Ibid., p. 88.

that Jesus is the Messiah were only understandable in terms of the promises of the God of the Israelites. Although in the early church a bitter hostility developed between the Jews and Christians, for a multitude of reasons, it remained true that the Christians, in spite of the attempts of Marcion, could not interpret the full meaning of the Christ event without the aid of the history of Israel.

So, when we approach the Biblical text, we are confounded with a host of "interpretive situations," where a particular text served as a "unit of communication" within the purposes and limitations of each situation. The canonization of the scriptures closed the extension of the literary "work" of interpretation, and set forth the text as final and sufficient for the future. Canonization is a clear statement that the events and understandings recorded form the center of the Christian faith and of Biblical interpretation. As we, in the contextual mode of interpretation, discern and construct the context (historic and linguistic) of the text, our own assumptions of our situation and our evaluations of the audience's ways of interpreting become questioned, exposed, and seen in new ways. This "exchange" between the context brings new sights and sounds, new ways of seeing both the text and the situation.

The "hermeneutical conversation," as Gadamer has said, enables the discovery of a common language for the interpreter and the text, and, we would add, the interpreter's audience.[11]

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[11] Truth and Method, p. 349.

Through the tensions between the current context and the textual context, a power for new sayings becomes available which allows the integration of the "old" and the "new." This integration both creates understanding and furthers understanding, not simply of the text, but of the prospective meanings of the total context. These possibilities can be described as a move from contextual to tropical interpretation.

Tropical Interpretation

Although "tropical interpretation" was the "moral interpretation" of the traditional four-fold method, the use of this term here will be based upon the study of tropes in modern rhetoric, and represents an extension of Gadamer's use of the metaphor to explain the concept-formation which occurs through the fusion of horizons.[12] Gadamer believes, as did Aristotle, that the formation of concepts is closely related to the capacity for discovering similarities. In contrast to Aristotle, who emphasized the logical function of similarities and differences, Gadamer focuses upon the "fundamental metaphorical nature of language."

> The universality of the genus and the classificatory formation of concepts are far removed from the linguistic consciousness. Even disregarding all formal similarities that have nothing to do with the generic concept, if a person transfers an expression from one thing to the other, he has in mind something that is common to both of them, but this need not be in any sense generic universality. He is following, rather, his widening experience, which sees similarities, whether of the appearance of an object, or of its significance for us. It is the genius of linguistic consciousness to be able to give expression to these

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[12] Ibid., pp. 387-97.

> similarities. This is its fundamental metaphorical nature. . . .[13]

Gadamer criticizes Aristotle for turning metaphor into a rhetorical trope, which Gadamer takes to be merely instrumental.

> What originally constituted the basis of the life of language and made up its logical productivity, the spontaneous and inventive seeking out of similarities by means of which it is possible to order things, is now pushed to the side and instrumentalized into a rhetorical figure called metaphor.[14]

There is a question if this is a correct reading of Aristotle's Rhetoric, but, in any case, recent studies in the function of tropes allow us to see not only the metaphor, but also other tropes as fundamental aspects of interpretation.

Probably the most suggestive study of tropes is that by Kenneth Burke, in his essay, "Four Master Tropes."[15] Burke's interest in tropes is not in their figurative usage, but, as he says, "with their role in the discovery and description of the 'truth.'"[16] The four tropes he analyses and which we will briefly review are: metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, and irony.

Since we have already discussed the metaphor,[17] our treatment of it will be brief here. Burke says that the metaphor "brings out the thisness of a that, or the thatness of a this."[18] Considering the this and that of the past and present horizons in interpretation, metaphorical extension

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[13]Ibid., pp. 388-9. [14]Ibid., pp. 391-2.

[15]Kenneth Burke, "Four Master Tropes, in A Grammar of Motives (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), pp. 503-17.

[16]Ibid., p. 503. [17]See pages 77-80, above.

[18]Burke, p. 503.

can be understood as the process of mediation between the constructed text's horizon and the audience-horizon through the articulation of the common relations.

When we remember that metaphors are essentially triadic, and that the third aspect, which we said earlier approximates the implied probability of the enthymeme, we can see how the metaphor invokes the audience's participation. Like the enthymeme, the metaphor functions to create or change the ways in which things are seen, and in this sense, we can agree with Burke's suggestion that metaphors create a "perspective."

Metaphor, in the final analysis, is a productive effort, touching the basic structures of doxa. It is both dependent upon doxa for understanding, and yet also may transform it through discourse. It is this creative and uniting power which has made metaphor a favorite figure in hermeneutical theory. However, the metaphor sometimes has been taken to be the only trope, whereas, in fact, other tropes which function quite differently, are also significant in the discovery of "the truth."

When we turn to the second trope, metonymy, it will help to first look at the distinction between metaphoric and metonymic processes as they have been clarified by Roman Jakobson.[19] Whereas metaphor works through substitution of one term for another, and is based upon the relation of similarity, the metonymy works through association of one term with another,

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[19]Roman Jakobson and Morris Halle, Fundamentals of Language (The Hague: Mouton & Co., 1956), pp. 56f.

and is based upon the relation of contiguity. Jakobson gives as an example of the difference between the two tropes by comparing responses to the term "hut." The metaphoric response was one of semantic similarity: "den" or "burrow." The metonymic responses were such terms as "thatch," "litter," or "poverty," each based upon contiguity.[20] The results of Jakobson's distinction have been extended by Herbert Schneidau in his study of the Bible and the Western tradition. He makes the following distinction between the two tropes: "Metaphor seeks to be a totalizing, closed act asserting shared essence, but metonymy displays endlessness, arbitrariness, hence the basic problematic of language and literature."[21] More interesting is Schneidau's application of this distinction to his study of the Bible:

> But the words also remind us of the mythological consciousness and its belief in access to power and divinity: especially because metaphor is a fundamental mode of what was for the Hebrews idol-worship. The pagan gods were embodied in forms that were metaphors of their power, "necessary links": e.g., Baal is really in the storm and it expresses his nature. But Yahweh, we remember, is never in any of his appearances, only behind them, and they are arbitrary not necessary links: They neither express his power nor furnish analogies to it. They tell us not <u>what</u> he is, but <u>that</u> he is.[22]

If metaphor tends toward myth, as Schneidau suggests, then especially for Biblical interpretation metonymy, as a "demythologizing," or as Burke says, a reductive process, can be an integral aspect of interpretation. Metonymic tropes perform a de-construction of metaphoric tropes, which allows

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[20] Ibid., p. 77. [21] Schneidau, <u>Sacred Discontent</u>, p. 289.

[22] Ibid., pp. 289-90.

the "event" character of understanding to remain open to further experiences rather than to become captivated in language.

The third trope, synecdoche, a variety of metonymy, entails the substitution of one term for another, in which "the linking term is experience."[23] Synecdoche is usually understood in terms of representation; the figurative term represents the base term. Some of the common synecdochic "representations" are the part for the whole, the container for the contained, the sign for the signified, and cause for effect, or the opposite of these.[24] The principle that "the part represents the whole" is of course a basic hermeneutical principle (borrowed from rhetoric), and continues to be an integral part of textual analysis. In the interpretive situation, the decision of what stands for what (represents) will be of crucial importance.

It is in synecdochic interpretation that the interpreter establishes paradigms. Through the establishment of what Burke calls the "representative anecdote" one chooses how the whole will be seen, and there is always the danger of the "synecdochic fallacy" which is to mistake the part for the whole.[25] It is the contingent and unstable relationship between the part and whole which moves us to the fourth trope in Burke's list: irony. Just as the metonymic interpretation

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[23]William Brandt, The Rhetoric of Argumentation (New York: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1970), p. 145.

[24]Burke, Grammar of Motives, p. 507.

[25]Burke, Philosophy of Forms, p. 139.

"saves" the metaphoric from the creation of idols, so also does the ironic "save" the synecdochic.

Irony, although not usually classified as a trope, fits into Burke's own strategy of using tropes as ways of exposing the transference and transmission of meaning through linguistic action. Irony is really an attitude which arises from an awareness of the dialectic or drama of the relationships between the parts and the whole. Burke writes:

> As an over-all ironic formula here, and one that has the quality of "inevitability," we could lay it down that "what goes forth as A returns as non-A." This is the basic pattern that places the essence of drama and dialectic in the irony of the "peripety," the strategic moment of reversal.[26]

These four tropes, and tropological interpretation in general, can be applied not only to texts and language, but also to human action. Human action "represents" more than it literally "says." Just as the tropical interpretation of texts opens itself to the "surplus of meaning," so also does human activity.[27]

The analysis of tropes provided by Burke allows us not only to see some of the ways tropes may facilitate the discovery of what to say, but also provides a basis for the further exploration of the relationships between tropes and argumentation. In order to examine this possibility, we shall take up one trope which Burke has placed under the rubric of synecdoche: the sign and the signified.

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[26]Burke, Grammar of Motives, p. 517.

[27]The term is from Ricoeur.

The "sign" has special importance for Biblical interpretation because of its use in the New Testament and in typological interpretation. However, there is a common understanding that signs are things or words which "refer" to other things, words, or ideas. This interpretation views signs not as tropes at all, but rather as referential objects, and has its roots in Stoic logic. It has dominated sign theory, and, as Gadamer rightly says, turns language into an instrument, destroying the original connection between thinking and speaking.[28] In contrast to this theory of signs, which is based upon an assumption of correlation between sign and object, it seems helpful to suggest, following Burke, that signs are synecdochic, and approximate the synecdoche of part and whole. The "sign" represents what it signifies. It is the "representation" that the reader "infers" from the sign. In other words, instead of signs of reference, signs could also be understood as inferential, and that is the proposal we will follow.

Is this not a more adequate perspective for understanding the use of "signs" in the New Testament, at least most of them? For example, in Matthew we read:

> Now when John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples, and said to him, "Are you he who is to come, or shall we look for another?" And Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is he who takes no offence at me (Matthew 11:2-6).

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[28] Truth and Method, p. 392.

These signs of the Messianic age are correctly understood, it seems to me, by drawing the right inferences from them. They did not so much "refer" to something, but rather "represent" and the receiver is asked to acknowledge what they represent. This is an important consideration. It means that God's "presence" or the pressure of the Kingdom does not refer to an "object," something to which the sign points, but rather the signified is represented in the sign to be acknowledged, and through acknowledgement the signified is "known." Signs require acknowledgement in order to give knowledge.

In order to clarify the inferential and argumentative possibility of signs, it is necessary to explore further the difference between inference and reference. For example, the referential sign is primarily seen in terms of relation, with the problematic of how the sign "relates" to the thing signified. The sign and thing signified are fundamentally external to each other. Signs of inference, on the other hand, are tropes where the signification is implicated in the sign. What is true of the sign is applicable to other tropes as well. John Kozy puts it this way:

> Thus all reasoning--formal, informal, inductive, figurative--is merely the unfolding of what is folded in or the folding in of what is unfolded, the explicating of the implicated or the implicating of the explicated, and the same presupposition underlies all modes of thought, including the figurative mode.[29]

It is precisely the unfolding and folding which characterizes the inferential nature of tropes. To varying degrees, dif-

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[29]John Kozy, Jr., "The Argumentative Use of Rhetorical Figures," Philosophy and Rhetoric 3 (Summer 1970):149.

ferent tropes hold back or constrain the unfolding of the significations they imply. They cannot be unfolded step by step without losing their power, but rather they require acknowledgement, on the spot. Aristotle spoke of this effectiveness of the metaphor as "brevity."

The sign, as one trope, does not itself create the correct inferences. Unlike the problem of reference, where the "reader" is faced with the problem of correspondence of sign to object, in inferential signs, he or she must infer from the signs what they mean. Such inference is based upon the common understandings we discussed earlier in the section on rhetorical method. How one structures experience (which can be approximately analyzed through the topics) will affect how one "reads" signs. We could say that, instead of the epistemological problem of knowledge, signs raise the existential problem of decision. One must decide what inferences are to be made, or decide whether or not to acknowledge the inferences that are made.

What we begin to see is that signs perform the dual purposes of the integration of different "worlds" and the provision of possibilities for acknowledgement.

The first aspect of signs refers us back to the contextual interpretation we spoke of earlier. The tropical mode of interpretation as a whole evolves out of the effort of contextual interpretation. Out of the "conversation" between the situation and the text, new ways of "reading" the

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[30]Aristotle Rhetoric 3. 10. 3.

initial "question" or exigence of the situation may occur. This exigence may then become re-shaped, corrected, and transformed through the creative seeing of new similarities between the text and situation. And, through the integration of the language of the audience and the text's language, tropical interpretation articulates, to use Burke's phrase, "the thisness of that and the thatness of this." This effort, it seems to me, results in a discernment of "the signs of the times," which are not simply there, but are rather discerned through the "fusion of horizons." This is the process of integration.

The process of acknowledgement entails that these "signs" are so articulated that implications are posited which may then be acknowledged or denied by the listeners or audience. The question is posed as to what events, taken as signs, mean. The question of meaning is the basic question of tropical interpretation.

This interpretation agrees with our everyday way of attempting to know what is happening. For example, the significant question about Watergate was: "What does this mean for us?" "What kind of inferences are to be drawn?" "What is it a sign of?" The discernment of the signs of the time, our time, is facilitated in the interpretation situation by the continuing conversation with the text which allows the text to function as a source for clues, hints, and paradigms, for interpreting the present time. In this sense, Ebeling was absolutely correct when he said that the Bible is a hermeneu-

tical aid for interpreting the present. The "fusion" which occurs through the tropical interpretation is both a "doing" of the interpreter and a "happening" of language, or what the new hermeneutic called a "language-event."

A further task of interpretation theory is to account for the movement out of interpretation. As we have understood "situation" it is a time in the continuing conversation of everyday life when a question confronts us with an urgency that provokes us to move toward the task of interpretation. We have dealt extensively with the issue of how one enters the interpretive situation, and where one properly begins the circular character of interpretation. Now we must also address the question of how interpretation "ends," and in order to do this, we will turn to the third "fold" of interpretation, the eschatological.

Eschatological Interpretation

Although the term eschatology has a wide and complex range of meanings, its use in this interpretive description will focus more upon its function than upon its definition. If we look at eschatological pronouncements, and even at apocalyptic literature, in retrospect we can see that its function has been not to "end" the human story, but rather to keep it open for the future. For example, the Apocalypse of John was written during a time of persecution, when the possibility loomed that the powers that be, namely the Roman world, controlled the future. The Apocalypse, although it describes the "end of times," functioned to open and to keep

open the future of the human story. So, instead of understanding eschatology as the end of the story, it seems to make more sense to understand it as the story of the end, an end which in fact protests against the apparent end and secures a real future.

Assuming then that eschatology has to do with the future of the human story, it is necessary to understand the function of story before we can see the full significance of eschatology. "Story," to quote Lehmann, is "the narration in the power of language and of social cohesion of what it takes to be and to stay human in the world."[31] Of course, there is a great variety of stories, but our concern is with the Biblical story and the Biblical apperception of the current story which elicits interpretation.

The story of the Bible can be seen as a response by a people to those events and experiences that shaped their lives and which were shaped by the stories that held these events and people together. The story so dominates the Biblical record that if one were to ask what "Jesus is the Messiah" means, one appropriate response would be to tell a story. However, and this is the crux of the matter, the Biblical story is not an end in itself. The eschatological dimension of the story, in spite of the desires of some in the early church and the plans of others throughout Western culture, meant and means that the story of the end is not the end of the story. Even the Apocalypse, which is not short in des-

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[31]Lehmann, Transfiguration of Politics, p. 10.

criptive detail, says in the final chapters: "Behold, I make all things new." Amos Wilder puts it this way:

> We can make one general remark about the narrative mode of much of the New Testament. These stories, long and short, in one way or another carry over into the future. . . . Now, this is certainly true of the Bible epic as a whole. God's last word is still to be spoken.[32]

Three different inferences can be drawn from the eschatological dimension of the Biblical story. First of all, the story itself is not correctly understood when it is taken as a "closed" drama to be repeated; secondly, the present situation can be seen as a part of the continuing story that has not ended; and thirdly, the telling and interpretation of the story does not include the ending, but must seek to keep the end open.

In order to increase our awareness of these implications, it is helpful to remember the distinction made by Bertolt Brecht between the classical, "dramatic" theatre and the "epic" theatre. Whereas the first sees the audience as empathizing with the hero of the story, primarily on the level of feeling (pity and fear) and it shows the audience the way things are and have eternally been, the epic theatre sees the audience as regognizing the reasons for a displayed scene, primarily on the level of reason (opinion and criticism) and it shows the audience that things are changeable.[33] Hans-

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[32]Amos Wilder, The Language of the Gospel: Early Christian Rhetoric (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), p. 67.

[33]Bertolt Brecht, "The Modern Theatre and the Epic Theatre," in Brecht on Threatre, trans. John Willett (New York: Hill and Wang, 1978), p. 37.

Dieter Bastian recognized the importance of Brecht for Biblical interpretation several years ago, but unfortunately little has been done to incorporate his work into hermeneutics. Bastian used a Brechtian perspective to examine the parables, which resulted in the following analysis:

> The parables are a type of indirect communication. They de-form the commonly accepted forms of Jewish piety, they transmit for the usual themes of the Torah an "alien view" which causes amazement and perhaps even protest, and they finally lead to the realization that Jesus came not to reinterpret the world, but to change it.[34]

Instead of a "participation" in the story of the text, Brecht suggests to us that the text opens one to move into the social and personal world with a new, critical perception.

This "alienating" effect which Brecht attempted to develop in the theatre can occur with the text through the textual criticism we discussed earlier. By investigating the context of the text, one becomes aware that the implied audience is not one's self, but rather that there is the otherness of the text which must be recognized. Furthermore, Brecht's alienation effect can be instructive for interpreting the present situation. In fact, as we have described the tropical interpretation, as a process of seeing the thisness of a that and the thatness of a this, we have moved closer to the kind of interpretation that Brecht described. However, he moves us further in that the epic theatre would present an incident or issue as a "story," or narrative, and thereby offers occa-

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[34]Hans-Dieter Bastian, Theologische Existence Heute: Verfremdung and Verkündigung 127 (Muenchen: Chr. Kaiserverlag, 1967):41. (Translation mine.)

sion for commentary. At the same time, the very presentation allows what is taken-for-granted to become questioned. "The theatre concentrates entirely on whatever in this perfectly everyday event is remarkable, particular, and demanding inquiry."[35] In other words, the manner of presenting (as a narrative, and at the same time as strange) allows the listener to recognize the possibility of different interpretations of the events that happened and to assume a different relationship to them.

The primary thrust of Brecht's proposal is to give to the audience the decision-making power to recognize what stands for what, and the presentation functions to awaken the listener to the world in which he or she lives, rather than to enclose him or her in a completed world, where everything is already finished.

This similarity between the eschatological story and Brecht's epic theatre provides a fortunate coincidence for the possibility of overcoming a false consciousness which "enters" texts as though they were ends in themselves. It can also prevent a false consciousness which assumes that interpretation is an end in itself. Interpretation exists for the audience for whom and to whom one interprets. Understanding, which is the purpose of interpretation, is not something interpretation can insure. It is the audience that must acknowledge what has been interpreted in their responsibility. At the same time, this in no way implies that the audience is the sole guide for interpretation. Aristotle reminds us that the measure of success is not that the audience is persuaded, but rather that one

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[35]Bertolt Brecht, "Alienation Effects in Chinese Acting," in Brecht on Theatre, p. 97.

goes about the task of persuasion in the correct manner.[36]

We have tried to suggest that one aspect of the correct manner is the inclusion of the audience as a co-constituent of discourse, and that the task of interpretation today entails the construction of a universal audience where what is common equals what is human and real. Until one achieves some sensibility of the possible agreements that we have in common, the very plurality of most assembled audiences, and the scattered character of our corporate life as a whole, gives very few clues as to what to say or to whom we are speaking. We need to overcome the supermarket attitude of letting each consumer take what he or she needs from an interpretation, as well as the dogmatic attitude that everyone deserves what they receive. We have suggested instead that through listening and critical analysis, an audience can be so constructed that the space between reality and fiction can become a place for understanding. Then the continuing conversation which provided the beginning for conscious, responsible interpretation also brings it to its end. Another episode has happened in the episodic life of interpretation.

It is the eschatological interpretation that enables the letting go, the giving to the audience, and, finally, it provides the future which gives time and space for the acknowledgement of the one who is before all things, and holds all things together (Colossians 1.17).

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[36] Rhetoric 1. 1. 14.

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